

PLAYSTATION 4

PLAYAU



ISSUE NO 250
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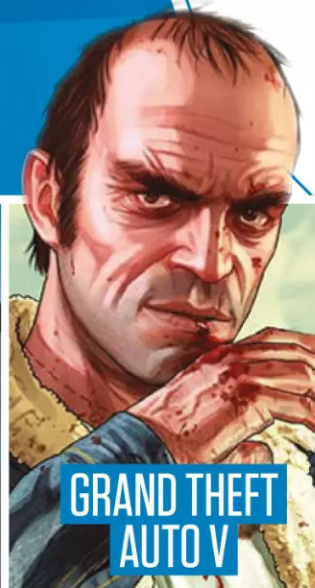
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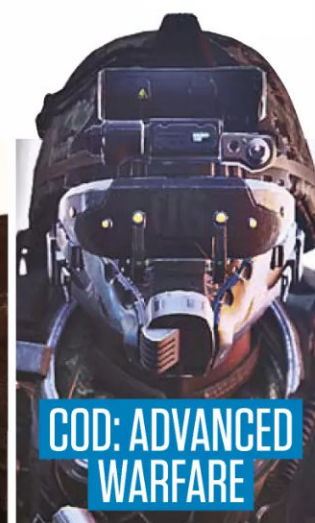
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BATTLEFIELD
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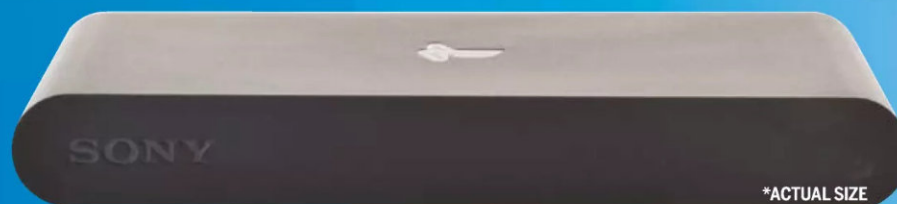
THE WITCHER 3
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FINAL FANTASY
TYPE-0 HD

PLAYSTATION TV

Everything you need to know about
Sony's must-have new gadget*



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ISSUE 250

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A NEW ERA BEGINS



I MUST SAY that it's quite the privilege to be able to welcome you to this, the 250th issue of **Play** magazine. Many respected names have shared the honour of penning

this page, and it's truly humbling to now sit among such great company. And what great timing, too – we've hit our own milestone just as Sony reaches one with PS4, now one year old and ready to show the world what it can really do. It's been a pretty strong year for Sony's new console (particularly in terms of sales), but the real fun starts here.

Games like *Call Of Duty: Advanced Warfare*, *Assassin's Creed: Unity* and the definitive version of *GTA V* are here to blow you away, while the coming year looks to be a relentless barrage of quality – February is packed, the summer looks way busier than usual and by the end of next year, we'll be playing the likes of *Uncharted 4* and *No Man's Sky*. Some have complained that there haven't really been that many reasons to join the new generation just yet, but all that is about to change. And if you're already a card-carrying member of the PS4 club, you're already perfectly poised to enjoy what seems set to be gaming's best year in a long, long time.

To make sure you're ready for all this awesomeness, we've put together a checklist of top-end accessories that will help you get more from your gaming time, plus we've had the chance to check out some of 2015's hottest prospects – Visceral's reinvention of the *Battlefield* series and From Software's stunning *Souls* successor *Bloodborne*, to name but a few. The hype train is about to depart and we've saved you a seat, so kick back and enjoy the ride.

Enjoy the issue, and I'll see ya online.

LUKE ALBIGÉS
DEPUTY EDITOR
@LukemonMGJ
PSN: PorthMinster

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Destiny (PS4)

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06

THE ULTIMATE PS4 EXPERIENCE

The best gadgets and accessories for your PS4

PLAY^{PS4} Contents

Everything you and your PS4 need is right here...

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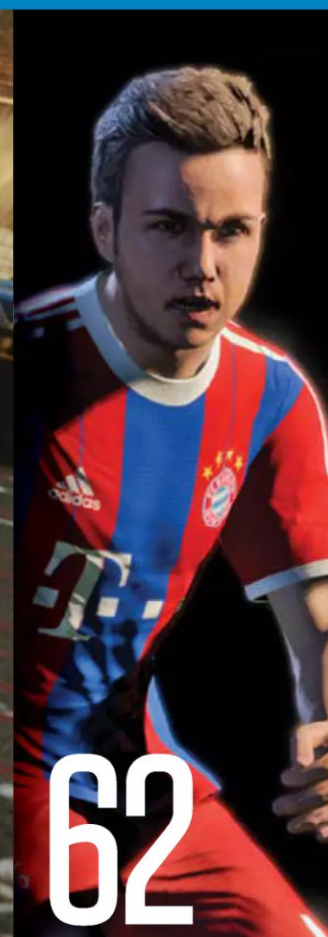
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Be afraid

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THE ULTIMATE PS4 EXPERIENCE

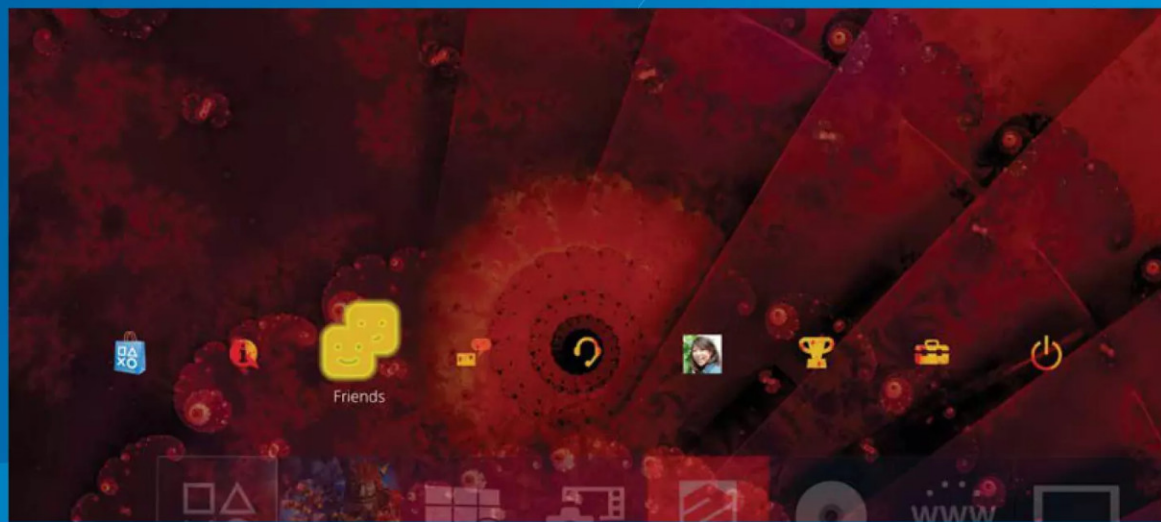
Time to level up your gaming set-up...

It's a pretty neat piece of kit right out of the box, but there are a number of ways to make the PS4 even more amazing. From headsets and software updates to capture gear and ingenious controller solutions, check out all the tools that will help you supercharge your PlayStation 4



PS4 FIRMWARE 2.00

Sony's first major console update detailed



SHARE PLAY

The best new feature of the new dashboard update is the Share Play feature, a way of passing control of your games to people on your friend list as if you just handed them your pad. It's a novel use of the same streaming tech that powers PS Now, and one that has several uses: you can let friends try out new games for themselves remotely; call for help when you get stuck; or let people sample hilarious bugs first-hand. It's a truly novel feature unique to the PS4 and hopefully, other additions like Suspend/Resume and PS Now will follow close behind. Just be wary of trolls... the last thing you want is for an ill-mannered guest to burn down your finest *Minecraft* creation or throw away all your Exotic *Destiny* gear.

ENHANCED STREAMING

Live streaming is something that has really taken off on PS4, and Sony has made some tweaks to it. The Live From PlayStation app now has a Featured channel where you can find official streams and those of your friends, while archived content can now be viewed as well as live broadcasts.

USB MUSIC PLAYBACK

Still no CD audio support or transferring MP3s to the hard drive, but this is a start – plug a USB device into the PS4 and you'll be able to enjoy your own music as you play. Supported file types apparently include MP3, MP4, M4A, and 3GP, which should be most bases covered.

DASHBOARD CUSTOMISATION

Themes are the big new addition in terms of making your PS4 experience your own. But even if you don't want to change things up all that much, there's still the ability to simply change up the colour of the PS4's home menus from a selection of new palettes. Will you stick with the classic blue, or is it time for something a little more adventurous?

YOUTUBE UPLOADS

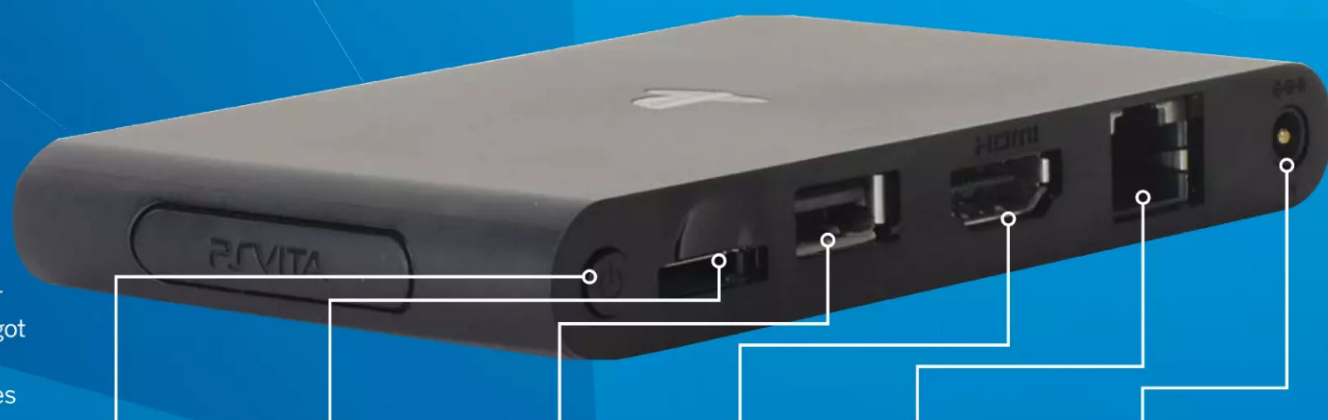
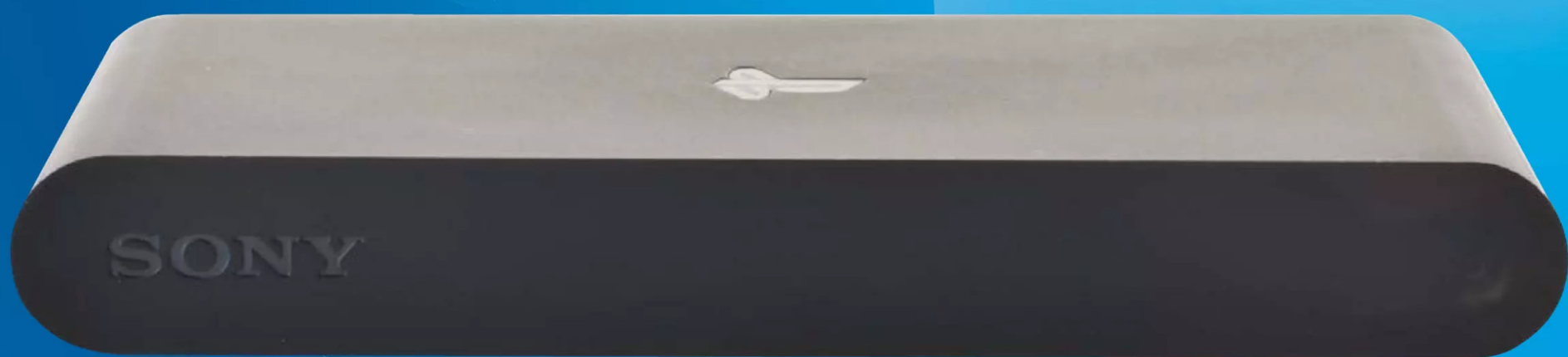
If you often use the Share button to record amazing gameplay highlights, you'll be glad to hear that the ability to upload videos direct to YouTube is finally here. ShareFactory can be used to add effects and audio, with this new feature allowing your finished videos to be uploaded direct from your console. Growing your channel has never been easier.

LIBRARY IMPROVEMENTS

There are several changes to the way the Library feature works, and they're all great. First is the ability to filter and sort content (useful if, like us, you've already got quite a lot of PS4 games) in order to quickly find what you want, while you can also now add PS+ freebies to your Library without actually downloading them via a new button in the Store – perfect if you're running low on hard drive space but don't want to miss out.

PLAYSTATION TV

The tiny box that does pretty much everything



POWER VITACARD SLOT USB PORT HDMI OUT ETHERNET POWER SUPPLY

This little £85 box is being pushed on two fronts: both as a device that you might want to grab because of what it can do on its own, and as an extender for your PS4. In order to use it, you'll simply need a DualShock 3 or DualShock 4 and a TV, then you're away. PS TV's got a slot for Vita cartridges, but with access to PSN, you can build yourself a digital library of Vita games and PlayStation classics.

And that's nowhere near everything this neat little device is capable of. When PS Now eventually extends to PS TV, you'll also be able to stream PS3 games on the system as well. A large part of the appeal of PS TV, however, is how it can be used in conjunction with the PS4. Seeing as PS TV has the same Remote Play functionality as Vita, you can set the console up in another room to your PS4 and stream your PS4 gameplay to the PS TV at a respectable 720p resolution.

You might have to do some experimentation to get the most stable, latency-free connection possible – we suggest you wire both your PS4 and PS TV to your home network with Ethernet cables if possible. If that's not an option, there are reports that you'll get a far better connection if you turn off the 'connect directly' option in your PS4's Remote Play Settings. This will stop PS TV bypassing your home network and connecting to the PS4 directly, which by all accounts, will lead to a better experience and increase the range over which you can use PS TV.



PlayStation TV comes with several bundled games, including Roll7's addictive skater, *OlliOlli*.

CRONUS MAX

Use any controller on your PS4

Sony didn't make any friends when it first announced that PS3 accessories wouldn't be compatible with PS4 despite both consoles using USB input devices as standard. But all is not lost for your fancy PS3 steering wheel or your trusty arcade stick – amazing little USB adapters like the Titan One and CronusMax (pictured) allow use of pretty much any recent controller on any modern console. PS4 use is a little more fiddly and requires a PC or laptop, but that's a small price to pay to save forking out for expensive peripherals all over again. That's not nearly all these USB wonders can do either, as you can see below...

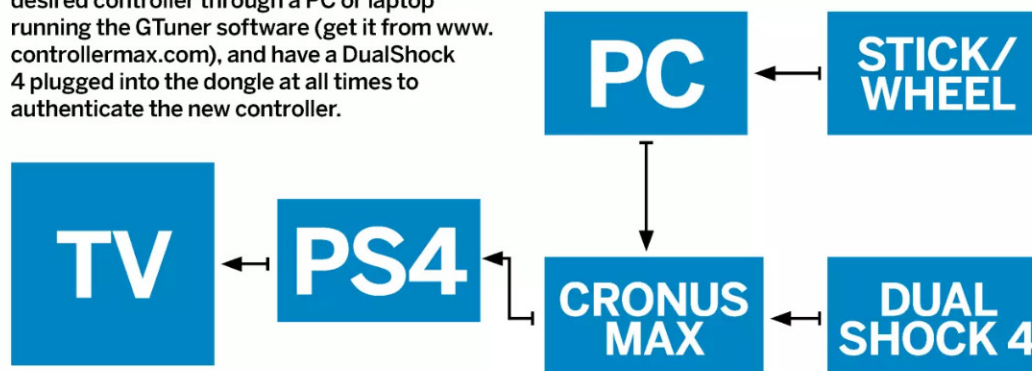
WHERE TO BUY:

CronusMax
shop.controllermax.com
£36

Titan One
www.extreme-mods.com
\$59.95

QUICK SET-UP GUIDE

It's plug-and-play with PS3, but PS4 support is a little trickier – you'll need to run your desired controller through a PC or laptop running the GTuner software (get it from www.controllermax.com), and have a DualShock 4 plugged into the dongle at all times to authenticate the new controller.



BUTTON REMAPPING

Connect your CronusMax to a PC and you're able to set it up with all kinds of controller preset packages that are user-made and easily downloaded from the free GTuner app. This extends far beyond the configuration screens in games themselves, allowing for things like mapping tilt control to analog sticks (and vice versa) or allowing D-pad use instead of the left stick. It's crazy useful.

MACROS/MODDING

Why spend £100+ on a modded controller with auto-fire and all that when this thing does a lot more for less? Existing packs offer things like recoil removal on a per-gun basis in FPS games (basically programming the right stick to pull the sights back to their original location after each shot) or one-button combos for fighting games, plus there are even more elaborate macros for laborious tasks like MMO gathering.

MOUSE/KEYBOARD

If you just can't give up on playing *Minecraft* the way you played it on PC in its early days, don't worry; it's not just things like sticks and wheels that can be made to work on PS4 (or indeed any console), you can even take your gaming mouse-and-keyboard from PC to console thanks to this device. As with other controllers, you'll need to run it through a PC for this, but the official forum is pretty helpful if you get lost.

PLAYSTATION NOW

Cloud gaming for the mass market



It's not been officially released yet, but it's possible to sign up for the PS Now beta on PS4 and PS3 and have a peek at what the future might offer. For the uninitiated, PS Now is a streaming service that lets you play PS3 games from the cloud, using your PS4 or PS3 (and in the future, Vita and PS TV). Once the service is up and running, we'd expect that Sony will look to expand the library to include PS4 games and perhaps even some PlayStation classics. As far as we're concerned, the fact that you can play PS3 games without owning a PS3 is still pretty cool. If and when the service expands to include PS4 games, then it's worth remembering that you'll be able to access them with the relatively inexpensive PS TV. The pricing model for PS Now isn't locked down yet, so it'll be interesting to see whether Sony sticks to a rental system or introduces some kind of subscription model in the future. We'd be all over that...

PROJECT MORPHEUS



Unfortunately, you can't get your hands on this yet, but if you're anything like us, you probably really, really want one. With the development of Sony's Project Morpheus and the growing momentum of the Facebook-owned Oculus Rift, it looks like VR and, more importantly from our perspective, VR gaming, is going to be a success. We've really hope that Project Morpheus and the PS4 can deliver on the promise that VR couldn't match in the Nineties due to technical limitations; if it does it's going to be awesome. CCP's space dogfighter *EVE Valkyrie* is the only big title we know about that's definitely being developed for Project Morpheus, but we're certain Sony's got plenty more in the pipeline. It's not hard to imagine the potential of Project Morpheus – from racers, to exploration games, to horror titles, there are loads of game worlds that we'd love to step into with Project Morpheus strapped on our noggin.

IPS VITA



We love the Vita. We think it's a great handheld console with some awesome games. It does also have value as an accessory for your PS4, though. Whether you simply want to laze about playing PS4 games in your bed while your PS4 is running in the lounge, or you want to get on with your gaming while someone else is watching TV, the Vita allows you to do that via Remote Play. For those who don't know what that is, Remote Play allows you to stream your PS4 gameplay to your Vita using your home network. In fact, it is possible to play your PS4 from *anywhere* providing you've got an internet connection, though your more likely to get a stable, lag-free experience when around the house. It really is quite impressive from a technical perspective and adds another string to the bow of a console that's already got plenty going for it. Given how expensive DualShock 4's are, it's also worth bearing in mind that you can use the Vita as a second controller for PS4 if you fancy engaging in a bit of local multiplayer.

ELGATO GAME CAPTURE HD60



Now that the PS4 allows you to turn off HDCP, it's possible to capture your own footage with capture kits like the Elgato. We've had plenty of experience using the standard Elgato Game Capture HD and it's a great little device. With the release of the HD60 for £139.95, though, you've now got the ability to capture your beautiful 1080p footage at a full 60fps. If you're only capturing from PS4 then the HD60 should do you fine, but it's worth bearing in mind that you'll want to go for the older model if you want to capture from older consoles as the HD60 only supports HDMI input.

PS4 CAMERA & MOVE



If you're interested in live streaming, the PS4's camera is pretty much essential, as people seem to like seeing your face when you're playing games for their entertainment. Aside from being necessary for the PlayRoom, it's also got some cool in-game applications. You can give voice commands in order to make substitutions in *FIFA 15*, for example (though you won't need the camera to do this if you've got a headset with a mic). It's compatible with the Move controllers originally released for PS3, too, so gives you an excuse to dig them out again. Given that DualShock 4s are still a tad expensive, it's also worth bearing in mind that you can use Move as a secondary controller for your PS4. Combine a couple of Moves with your Vita and you've got enough pads to play four-player *Sportsfriends* – hurrah!

I HEADSETS



Everyone's always banging on about frame rates, resolutions and particle effects, but the importance of sound is not to be underestimated; a good headset can make a hell of a difference. If you fancy going all in on something high-end, a headset like the Turtle Beach Elite 800 might be worth your consideration. It's got the 7.1 surround sound that you'll need to get the best possible audio performance from your PS4 and a range of preset DTS modes tailored to different genres of games. It's also wireless, has noise cancellation and dual hidden

microphones. We've had a go with it and can confirm it's pretty boss. Weighing in at £249.99, though, it's not going to be for everyone. For something a little more modest, you could go for Sony's official wireless 2.0 headset. Sure, the audio quality's not going to match what you'll get from the Elite 800, but it's at least got simulated surround sound and as such will provide you with decent audio quality. It's also nice and comfy and comes equipped with an internal microphone. You can pick these up for around £70-80, so they won't break the bank.

BURNING MONEY

EMPEROR 200

When not sitting atop our pile of gold bars and diamonds, we refuse to play games sat in any other seat than the \$50,000 Emperor 200. As well as having three big screens attached at the tip of its scorpion-like appendage, it's got a built-in sound system and an electric powered leather seat. Best of all, it eliminates the need for going outside with its air filtration and vitamin D-providing light therapy system.

VRX IMOTION SIMULATOR

For around £25,000 you can step out of your Emperor 200 for racing games, and into a racing chair with three 1080p screens, a fancy gearbox with F1-style shifters, a 500-watt speaker system and adjustable pedals. It's also got some motion thing that apparently produces 2Gs of force, somehow.

LIGHTBERRY

If you've got the money to buy it and the patience to set it up, Lightberry looks to be a pretty cool accessory for your PS4 (it's certainly more affordable than these other accessories). Running off a Raspberry Pi, the Lightberry system outputs colours to lights strapped around the back of your TV that correlate to the picture being displayed on screen. The result is a really cool ambient effect whereby your game world seems to bleed into reality as the Lightberry projects it out onto the walls around your TV set. We want a set, but we're not sure why.

LOCKED AND LOADED

As well as having a variety of weapons to choose from, you can load up gadgets to help you achieve your objectives. Trip mines are a personal favourite.

FREEZE!

Using the police scanner can reveal enemies that have a bounty on their head. In those cases, you'll want to make sure you arrest them to receive a reward.

UNCANNY VALLEY

Okay, we know this dude has got a balaclava on, but trust us when we say that what we've seen of *Battlefield*'s facial capture looks pretty impressive.



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Battlefield Hardline

In the clink for a little longer



DELAYING GAMES INTO 2015 seems to be the in thing right now. Seemingly cognisant of that fact, *Battlefield Hardline* is right on trend, with developers Visceral announcing that the game has been pushed back from its 24 October release date into early 2015. Are we disappointed? Yes, because, for one thing, we like *Battlefield* and for another, we're curious to see what Visceral can do with DICE's series.

Before we start complaining about the games delay, though, let's remember *Battlefield 4*. When it worked, it was bloody brilliant, but its launch was beset by server issues and bugs that left many fans criticising EA for releasing a broken game. With *Hardline*, then, let's hope that this is a case of EA learning a lesson. As much as we'd like to play the game in 2014, if delaying it into 2015 means that we get a game that, to put it bluntly, works, then it will be worth the wait. Now that we've got its launch delay out the way, let's move on to talk about the game itself. Given that we recently got a chance to go hands-on with the single-player, we'll start there.

One of the most intriguing elements about *Hardline*'s campaign is that it's broken up into episodic chunks. "We really like a lot of the crime

dramas on TV and the way that they get paced out," *Hardline*'s executive producer Steve Papoutsis tells us, explaining that each level is structured as if it's an episode of a TV series. Indeed, an episodic structure feels like a more natural fit for an experience that's likely to be played in chunks over a longer period of time, as opposed to trying to emulate film, a medium that works best watched in one sitting.

Pacing is not the only element that's been taken from TV. "When you come back and it's been a few days, now you can watch a 'previously on...' that tells you what was going on in the story so that you're caught back up," says Papoutsis. Conversely, if you're debating whether to go to bed or play one more episode, you can tease yourself with a 'next time on *Battlefield Hardline*'. It's not something that we'd call a game changer, but it certainly sounds like a cool little feature.

As to the specifics of what we played, the first level was very much a scene-setting, tutorial-like level in which protagonist Nick Mendoza and his partner Khai Minh Dao cruise through a rough LA neighbourhood in search of a perp. The immediate impression we got is that *Hardline* will pay closer attention to establishing and developing its characters than we've typically seen in *Battlefield*

games, though we can of course only glean so much from the limited amount we've played.

Over the course of that opening level, we were introduced to a number of mechanics that will form a part of the *Battlefield Hardline* arsenal. Perhaps our favourite is the 'freeze' mechanic. This allows you to whip out your badge and have your enemies down their guns. It's necessary to keep your gun trained on the bad guys until you've cuffed them, lest they decide to try and grab their weapon when they perceive your attention waning. The reason we like the mechanic – aside from the fact that it's just cool telling people to freeze – is that it shows developer Visceral hasn't forgotten that you're meant to be a police officer; it doesn't always make sense for you to be popping heads. Being able to halt and arrest enemies is a small touch, but one that plays well into the fictional premise of the game.

After playing through *Hardline*'s first mission and a level from much later in the game, we got the impression that the game allows you to control the pacing to a much greater degree than in recent *Battlefield* campaigns. It seems that there will be relatively linear sections and action set pieces, but these are counterbalanced with what we're inclined to label mini-sandboxes. To give an example, we

were confronted with a level in which our objective was to get to an elevator in the lobby of a heavily guarded building. This is a first-person shooter, so, naturally, the option to waltz through the front door guns blazing is there. However, it is also entirely possible to go for the stealth approach and try and sneak your way through.

As it turns out, we went for a combination of the two. Climbing the stairs of the parking lot next to the building we were tasked with infiltrating, we used our vantage point to tag enemies with the police scanner so that we could track their patrols. With that recon completed, we snuck to the back of the building, distracted the guards posted to that entrance and took them both out with silent takedowns. We then crept inside, disabled the alarms and quietly took out one of two more enemies before we were spotted and a shoot-out ensued. With the alarms disabled, there would be no back up, so it was simply a case of finishing off the few guards that were left.

In giving you the ability to tag enemies, plan your own approach and use a mix of stealth and violence to achieve your goal, we couldn't help but be reminded of *Far Cry 3*'s base liberations.

Early indications suggest that *Hardline* won't quite have the scope and flexibility of that game, but we found the process of planning and executing our own strategy enjoyable nonetheless. Perhaps the biggest compliment we can give to what we've seen of *Hardline*'s campaign is that we're interested in playing it when *Hardline* releases. Recent *Battlefield* campaigns have been throwaway at best, so the fact that *Hardline* has managed to intrigue us with its single-player mode is not insignificant.

However, let us not forget that *Battlefield* is first and foremost a multiplayer game. Though what came out of the game's multiplayer beta was generally positive, there has been some concern that *Hardline* won't fully leverage the potential of its cops and robbers set-up and, consequently, will end up feeling like a reskin of a standard *Battlefield* game. That's something Visceral is well aware of.

"That's definitely been a criticism we heard early: 'it's just going to be a re-skin or it's just going to be a DLC at best'," says Papoutsis. "Obviously, as people working on it, that's absolutely not what we want to hear and that's absolutely not what we're doing." Papoutsis explains that Visceral intends to "lean into

the fantasy" and ensure that the game's multiplayer modes tap into the spirit of the cops and robbers set-up. "We created the Heist mode that we had, which is kind of your classic bank caper – bad guys trying to break in and steal money, the police trying to stop them. We had that in the beta and that seemed to go over fairly well, as well as our Blood Money mode. But there were things that we noticed coming out [of the beta] that we could improve to strengthen that tie to the fiction, so we've been incorporating that stuff," Papoutsis says.

In that vein, alongside classic modes like Conquest and Team Deathmatch, Visceral has recently unveiled its hostage rescue mode and car chase-based Hotwire mode. In regards to the latter, we have concerns about how well *Battlefield* maps will work, given that you're presumably going to end up driving around in circles, but it would be unfair to judge until we've had a chance to play it. For us, the important thing is that Visceral is conscious of the need to structure its modes around the cops and robbers fantasy. After all, what is more strongly associated with cops and robbers than a good ol' fashioned car chase?

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



Cops and robbers will have abilities and equipment specific to them – cops, for example, will have tasers.



In single-player, you avoid conflict by sneaking up on enemies and shouting "Freeze!" before cuffing them.



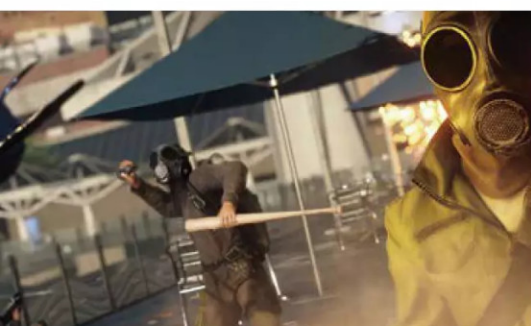
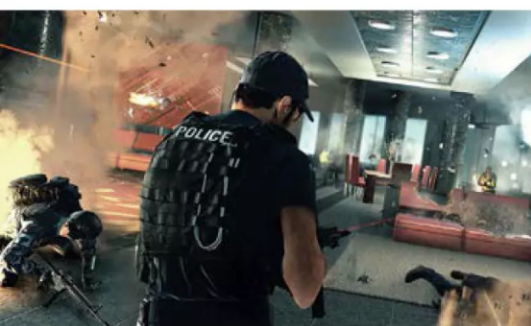
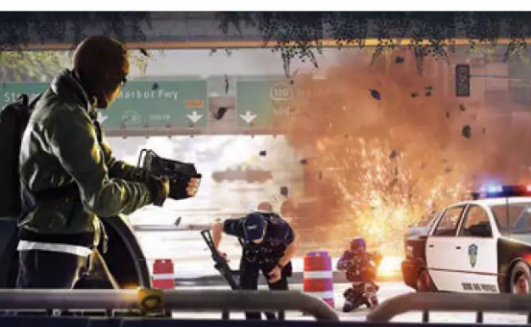
Battlefield's trademark destructive environments return, as well as the horrifically named 'Levolution'.



The game's 'previously on...' feature will give you a refresher when you come back to it after a few days.



"WHAT IS MORE STRONGLY ASSOCIATED WITH COPS AND ROBBERS THAN A GOOD OL' FASHIONED CAR CHASE?"



ΔΟΧΔ We think it's important that playing as the two different factions feels noticeably different in the game's multiplayer modes.



With lessons learned from *Battlefield 4*, the extra development time that the game's delay has afforded, and with DICE on hand for advice, you'd imagine that *Hardline*'s multiplayer will be solid at the very least. The real challenge for Visceral is that it not only has to capture the idea that we've all got in our heads about what a cops versus robbers game should feel like, but distinguish itself from what's already out there. If it can't do that, if it can't substantially delineate the experience of playing as a criminal or a police officer, then it's difficult to see how *Hardline* will impress on release.

The good news is that the game's delay suggests that Visceral's beta was about more than marketing and paying lip-service to the idea that it wanted fan feedback. The message Visceral has heard is that it needs to do some more work and, credit to the team, it's now giving itself the time to do it. We see a lot of potential in *Battlefield Hardline*, a lot of things that *could* work – from the episodic single-player campaign to the cops and robbers themed multiplayer modes. All that remains to be seen is whether the game's delay will result in that potential being fully realised.

Paul Walker-Emig

BATTLEFIELD HARDLINE Is serving hard time until next year at the offices of Visceral Games. Check the website for more details: battlefield.com/hardline

THE DNA OF HARDLINE

THE WALKING DEAD

Games like *The Walking Dead* have shown how well an episodic format can work – leading naturally as it does to climaxes and cliff-hangers that punctuate an overarching narrative. We're very much on board with the idea of a single-player campaign that we can play in episodic chunks.

FAR CRY 3

It's clear that *Hardline*'s also taken a leaf out of *Far Cry 3*'s book. Just as in that game, you're confronted with a fortified area and it's left up to you whether you want to go full on action hero, stealthy or a mix of the two in order to conquer it.

BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM

Hardline's police scanner isn't only used for tagging enemies. Just as with *Batman*'s detective vision, it's also used to scan evidence and solve simple puzzles.

BULLETSTORM

Similar to the way points earned in battle can be used at dropkits to purchase weapons in *Bulletstorm*, players can earn currency (the exact nature of which hasn't yet been locked down) throughout the campaign in order to buy new weapons and attachments.

ALIEN: ISOLATION

Alien, like every stealth game ever, has a mechanic where you can throw an item in order to distract the Alien. *Hardline* adds the same feature. Of course, here you're distracting people, not aliens.





INTERVIEW

Steve Papoutsis

Executive producer, Battlefield Hardline

Battlefield has always been seen as a multiplayer game, are you trying to ensure people pay attention to the single-player campaign this time around?

Well, ultimately, the game is a multiplayer game. We're putting a tremendous amount of work and effort behind the multiplayer portion of this game and hopefully people are going to be interested and excited to play the game because of the multiplayer, because of the ability to have those 'only-in-Battlefield moments'. But certainly, we are bringing a level of innovation to the franchise with our single-player campaign and we do have a number of people working on that hard to make that really fun. But, I think as an overall package, the way I would want people to evaluate and think about the game is: this is a *Battlefield* game.

Was the delay to the game mainly to make sure you get the multiplayer right?

When we debuted the game at E3, with the goals we had with taking the approach of announcing with the beta, there were a couple of things. One was, as a gamer myself, I just always thought it'd be really cool to, rather than hear about a game at E3, to get to play it, so we did the beta. The other part of that was, to your question, about getting our legs under us, so to speak, in terms of delivering something stable and also delivering a *Battlefield* multiplayer game from the ground up. So we wanted to put that out there, test it with the players and as it was a beta, not a demo, actually learn a lot of stuff from them in terms of what they thought about the theme, through to what they think about individual weapons or gadgets, the balance of game modes – we wanted to get that information.

We got the feedback, we came back and we were like, 'Wow, there's a ton of stuff here to do, how are we going to act on this with the release date in the near future?'. We talked about it and Andrew Wilson, our CEO, was behind the idea of 'Let's listen to our players and give the development team an opportunity to incorporate the feedback that makes sense'. We're not

taking everything everybody says and putting it into the game. We have to go through, look for commonalities, really decipher what some of these comments mean and then have our designers think about ways that we can improve what we have based on that feedback.

As well as having modes based around your theme, have you tried to keep the two sides feeling quite distinct in terms of their abilities?

That was a good thing that came out of our beta. We'd made the assumption that people would want to have more symmetry between the sides, so have them basically be the same.

“PLAYERS ENJOY ENGAGING WITH THE GAME BEYOND JUST PULLING THE TRIGGER”

To keep it fair?

Yeah, to keep it fair, but also, let's say you really enjoyed a particular weapon, say the AK47. You love that weapon, but if you only had it on one side, we thought people would be upset because they couldn't progress when they're on the other side in a match, because we alternate. But coming out of E3 we heard feedback that, no, people actually enjoyed the asymmetry. We've

leaned into that and we've incorporated that feedback so we do have some asymmetry there between the weapons. Some of them are shared but there are specific ones that are not.

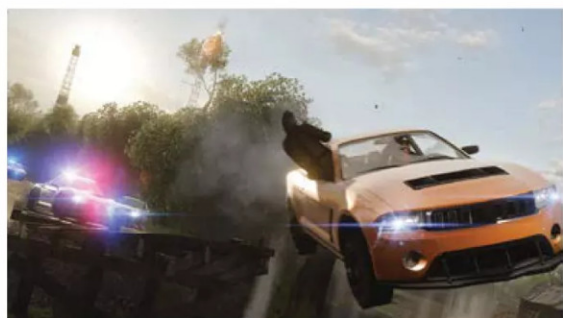
It seems like your trying to do something a bit different with *Hardline's* campaign in terms of the pacing and structure of the levels?

Absolutely. One thing that was important to us was not just to say it's a cops and robbers game and then let you run through and play it like any old FPS. We wanted to make it different and unique. So, things like the 'freeze' mechanic, being able to do non-lethal takedowns, the taser and things like that really feed into the cops and robbers fantasy, but also allow players to experience the game in a non-lethal or stealth way, a non-traditional first-person shooter way. So we deliberately wanted to develop mechanics that allowed people to do that if they chose to. But, it is a first-person shooter, so we needed to make sure the gun experience was rock solid and fun, when you pull the trigger of your gun and you have good hit reacts on the bad guys, and all those things. We've put a lot of attention across the campaign in making sure it's a great through-the-gun experience for the shooter fan, but also for somebody that what's to experience something little bit different, we've provided those avenues for them as well.

Did you take inspiration from anywhere else, as well as being a *Battlefield* game, because the levels felt a little bit more open and reminded me of other games where you're able to choose your approach?

If you look at games in recent years, players enjoy feeling smart. Players enjoy engaging with the game beyond just pulling the trigger. That's really evident in multiplayer, because when you go into multiplayer there are so many different strategies and approach and techniques that you can use. One of our desires was, looking at other games that have come out recently, the games that people really seem to be coming back





to and enjoying are ones where they can have a different experience. So when you go to work or go to school or whatever the next day you're talking about it and your saying 'I had this mission or this quest and I approached it this way'. I think it's most interesting when people go, 'Really? I did it this way' and then you think, 'I'm going to try it their way'. I think those are the games people are really remembering and enjoying, so we wanted to make sure we had the opportunity to deliver something like that in a first-person shooter, which is pretty different.

Do you see *Battlefield Hardline* as being something that can become its own thing, almost its own franchise?

I think we as a development team would love to see that happen. Right now this is really the proving ground. Let's get this game out and see what the players say. If they enjoy it and they want more of it, hopefully the company will be like, 'Let's go do more of it'. We'll just have to see.



ETA 14 APRIL 2015

DEV NETHERREALM STUDIOS

PUB WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT

TWITTER @NETHERREALM

Mortal Kombat X

You've got red on you



FROM AN OUTSIDE perspective, it must seem like fighting games rarely change. One player takes control of the combatant on the left side while the other takes over on the right. There are usually a couple of health bars to keep your eye on – one that you want to keep healthy and one that you want to empty – and the buttons you press invariably lead to punches, kicks and seemingly implausible feats. But for those who know their stuff, most fighting games tweak the formula in some subtle way. Most of the time this translates to a novelty or a gimmick, but every so often, the outcome is more profound.

This sense of forward thinking applies to *Mortal Kombat X*, a direct sequel to the 2011 reboot that also takes its cues from *Injustice: Gods Among Us*. After playing a few rounds of the latest build at a recent event, there's no question that the core principles are still intact. Blood starts to decorate the stage after the very first hit, special moves are performed with the traditional inputs and the block button – despite being a relic of the past that should've been banished years ago – is still the main source of defence. No, what makes *Mortal Kombat X* stand out from the crowd is the new fighting style system.

It's not the first game to offer different fighting styles (*Capcom vs SNK 2*, anyone?) and it certainly won't

be the last, but by making three distinct versions of each character, NetherRealm is rewriting part of the rulebook. You won't be forced to play an entirely new character if you fancy a change – you can just pick a different fighting style while retaining most of the moves you know already. There's also the potential to counter bad matchups, but for this to work, each fighting style needs to be on a fairly even footing. There's no point in implementing the system if each character has one style that stands out as the clear winner. They all need to be viable.

In this regard, it's still far too early to make a judgement call on the balancing. What we can say for sure, though, is that each fighting style feels fairly distinct. Kotal Khan, a new character who looks like a distant relative of *Tekken*'s Ancient Ogre, is blessed with a shield projectile, dragon punch and anti-air command grab. His Sun God style unlocks a choke slam that can regenerate health; his Blood God style is more offensive in nature and lets you sacrifice some health in exchange for dealing more damage; and his War God style gives him a large serrated blade that significantly increases his reach.


This level of creativity extends to the returning characters as well. Kano has access to the classic human cannonballs and knife throws that made him such a nightmare in the original, but when you factor

in his new fighting styles, he's less of a one-trick-pony. Cutthroat is all about building long knife combos by burning lots of meter, Cybernetic takes the focus away from the blades and places it on eye lasers, while Commando turns the heartless mercenary into a grappler. We don't know if he still wears underwear in this style but he gains a back-breaking command grab and the ability to counter low and high attacks.

As far as the revised fighting system goes, that's about all we were able to learn during our handful of matches. The fact that we're keen to get more hands-on time with the game and explore the depths of the new fighting styles speaks volumes for the development team's ambition. *Mortal Kombat* hasn't always been an easy game to like but this new entry looks very promising indeed. What's more, the shift to the PlayStation 4 has upped the level of detail considerably. The new Fatalities and X-Ray attacks offer a roadmap to the internal workings of the human body and you can now make out each individual tooth as it leaves its socket. It's still a gorefest, then, but it's one that's looking fleshed out in other areas.

Matthew Edwards

MORTAL KOMBAT X is being stitched together by NetherRealm Studios. Check out the official website for the latest news and updates: www.themortalkombat.com



△×□ Thanks to his status as a thunder god, Raiden has barely aged at all. He can still torpedo dive all day long.

“THE NEW FATALITIES AND X-RAY ATTACKS OFFER A ROADMAP TO THE INTERNAL WORKINGS OF THE HUMAN BODY”

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



With the power of the PS4 at its fingertips, NetherRealm is aiming for 60fps/1080p.



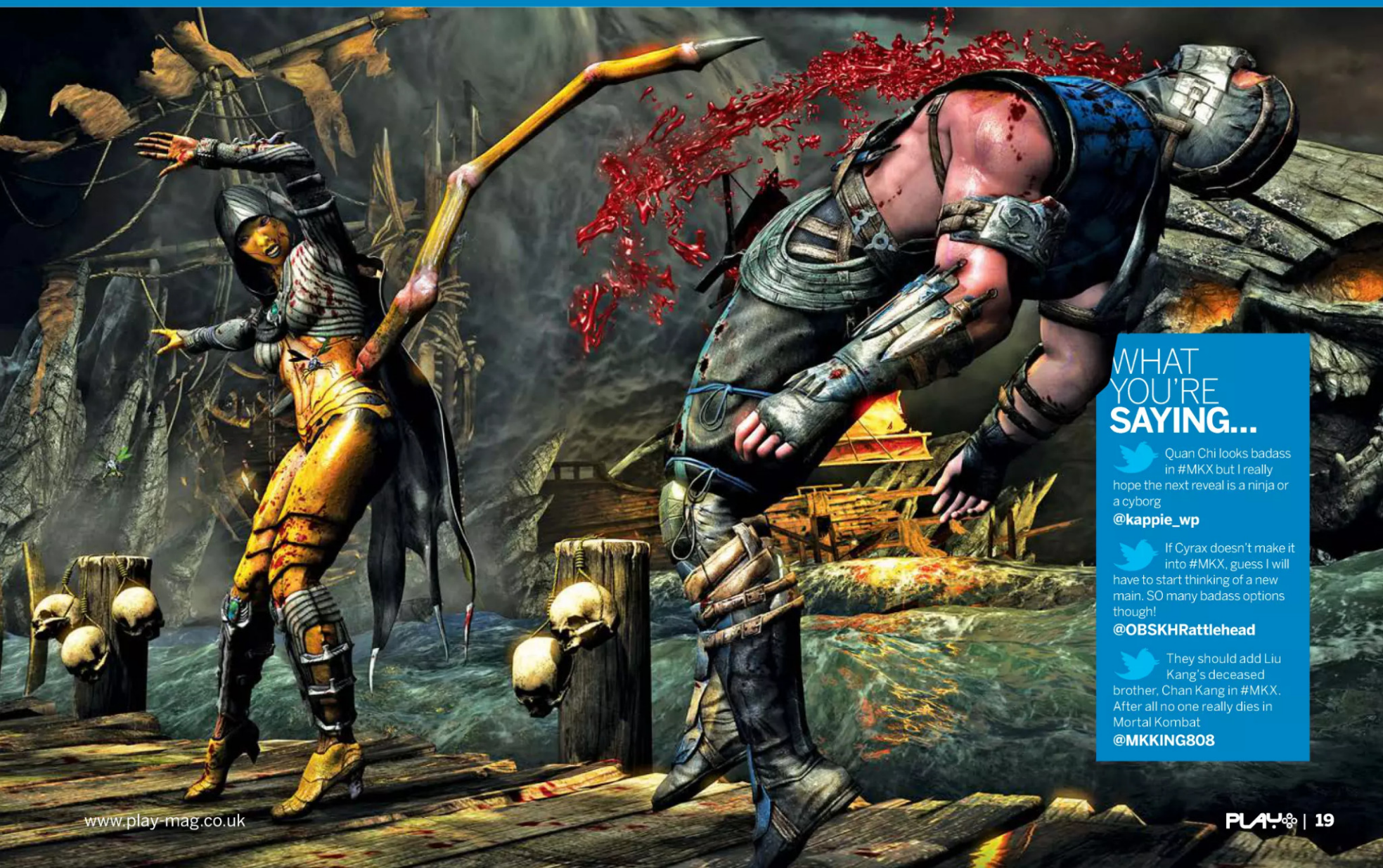
The latest character reveal is Quan Chi. His Warlock fighting style lets you create portals.



One of the interactive stages features an old woman that you can throw.



The new story mode will be set 25 years after the events of the last game.



WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...



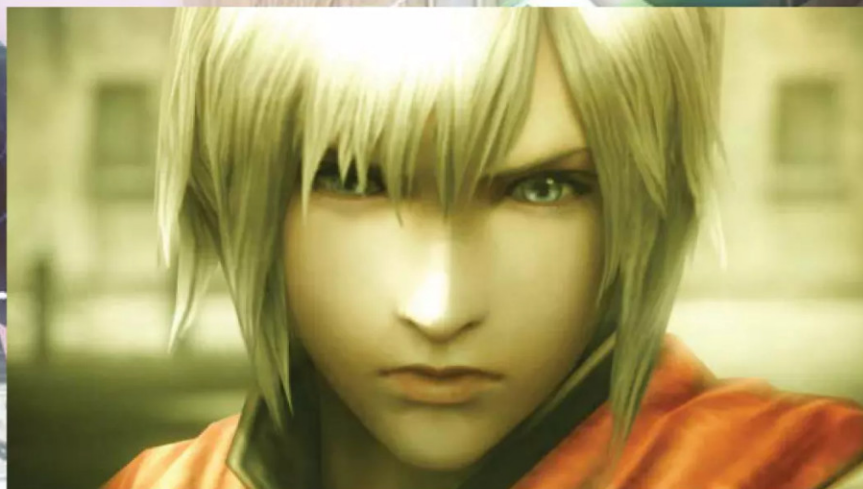
Quan Chi looks badass in #MKX but I really hope the next reveal is a ninja or a cyborg
[@kappie_wp](#)



If Cyrax doesn't make it into #MKX, guess I will have to start thinking of a new main. SO many badass options though!
[@OBSKHRattlehead](#)



They should add Liu Kang's deceased brother, Chan Kang in #MKX. After all no one really dies in Mortal Kombat
[@MKKING808](#)



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- It gives FF fans a chance to experience a game that they might have missed on PSP.
- It's got chocobo breeding in it. Come on, everyone likes chocobos? Right? Wark!
- Square Enix says that buying the game will grant you access to FFXV's first demo.
- The game looks really pretty now that Square has done an HD all over it.

△○×□ Just because *Type-0*'s got more of an action bent than other FF games, doesn't mean there're aren't plenty of numbers flying about.



ETA 20 MARCH 2015

DEV SQUARE ENIX

PUB SQUARE ENIX

TWITTER @SQUARE ENIX

Final Fantasy Type-0 HD

Every Cloud has a silver lining



WE'D IMAGINE MANY of you are shrugging your shoulders at the news that *Final Fantasy Type-0* is getting an HD re-release on PS4 – let us tell you why you shouldn't. Don't get us wrong, in the wake of spruced up re-releases of high-profile games like *The Last of Us* and *Tomb Raider*, that it may be difficult to muster much excitement for a relatively obscure *Final Fantasy* spin-off is understandable. However, the fact is, *Final Fantasy Type-0* was a well-received *Final Fantasy* game when it came out on PSP in Japan, and that makes it worth some consideration.

Given that *Type-0* isn't a particularly well-known entry in the series, let us prime you on what you can expect. Rather than the turn-based battle systems of *Final Fantasy* of old, the game uses a real-time system that's closer to the likes of *Final Fantasy XII* and *XIII*. In fact, while it is still an RPG, we'd argue that *Type-0* leans a little more towards being action-based than those comparisons; in *Type-0* you take direct control of your chosen character (though you can switch to another character at any given time) with actions being matched to the face buttons and a lock-on system used to direct your attacks.

In terms of setting, *Type-0* is part of the Fabula Nova Crystallis offshoot, meaning it shares some crossover with *Final Fantasy XIII*. That doesn't mean that you need to play *XIII* to get the most out of it – it simply

means that some of the mythology surrounding crystals and l'Cie will be familiar to those who've played that game. In fact, if there's any game that reminds us of *Type-0* in terms of setting and story, it's not *Final Fantasy XIII*, but *Final Fantasy VIII*. While set against a background of war and political conflict, the game focuses on a group of what are effectively school children: Class Zero. Granted, they're gifted, elite combatants being schooled in soldiery rather

year. Nevertheless, we do wonder if it might struggle. A touched-up version of a PSP game probably isn't going to light a fire under any but the most hardcore of *Final Fantasy* fans and we're not sure that there are as many of those as there used to be. If you are one of those hardcore fans, though, and you happened to miss out on *Type-0* on account of it only coming out in Japan, then this HD remake will provide an excellent opportunity to fill that gap in your collection.

“SET AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF WAR, THE GAME FOCUSES ON A GROUP WHO ARE EFFECTIVELY CHILDREN”

than more academic pursuits, but they are kids nonetheless. That set-up reminds us of *Final Fantasy VIII*'s Balamb Garden Military Academy in which Squall, Zell and Selphie undergo training to become members of the elite group SeeD at the beginning of the game. We're not quite sure why that set-up of a band of school kids fighting against the odds seems so intrinsically linked with the JRPG – from *Type-0*, to *FF VIII*, to the *Persona* games – nor why it is appealing, but it sure as hell is.

As an HD remake of a game that we already know went down well with fans, *Type-0* is probably going to be a pretty safe bet when it makes its way to PS4 next

For those not quite convinced, Square Enix's announcement that those who buy *Type-0* will get access to *Final Fantasy XV*'s first demo might just tip the balance (that better apply in Europe, Square, or we'll shake our fists angrily in your direction). Granted, it's a bit unfair to relegate *Type-0* to the position of being a means to get our hands on *Final Fantasy XV*, but you can't deny that it makes it tempting.

Paul Walker-Emig

FINAL FANTASY TYPE-0 HD is being summoned by Square Enix. Check the website for more details: square-enix.co.jp/fabula/0

△×□ We're not sure these school uniforms are really appropriate combat attire, but we're not experts.



ETA 24 FEBRUARY 2015

DEV CD PROJEKT RED

PUB BANDAI NAMCO

TWITTER @WITCHERGAME

The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt

Projekt Beast



YOU'VE ALL HEARD this phrase trotted out to hype whichever open-world game a developer is shilling in one configuration or another:

'the world itself is the real star'. While that might be becoming something of a cliché, it really is the world of *The Witcher 3* that has got us excited about that game. Aside from the fact that it looks incredible from a visual standpoint, it's a world that seems built to invite exploration, to pull the player down a path of discovery in a vast land replete with forests, mountains, ruins and villages to investigate.

Kudos to developer CD Projekt Red, then, because it says that tempting you to explore is precisely the intention. Hundreds of points of interest are being littered across *The Witcher 3*'s expansive map and the developer says that every one comes with its own back story, challenge and reward. In that sense, *The Witcher 3* inevitably invites comparisons to *Skyrim*, a game where the appeal also lies in forging your own unique path into the unknown. As far as we're concerned, that can only be a good thing.

If *The Witcher 3*'s world is worthy of being billed as protagonist Geralt's co-star, then it is going to have to have to be believable and show range in how it responds to your actions. Well, according to CD Projekt Red, that is precisely what it will do. Take the city of Novigrad – the biggest in the game. The game's developers say that each of its 2,000 inhabitants has their own agenda, giving the city a sense of realism as its citizens go about their daily business. You might overhear them talking about your past exploits, or whining about the bad weather. In addition, every character that you meet has the potential to react to protagonist Geralt in a variety of different ways. CD Projekt Red has hinted that drawing your sword in front of another individual, for example, could illicit fear, or result in aggression, depending on the characteristics of that particular person.

While we've been impressed from what we've seen of *The Witcher 3*'s world, from the bustling town of Novigrad, to its hostile, expansive wilderness, one of the most intriguing aspects of the game remains the beasts that will inhabit it. In relation to *The Witcher 3*'s 'Wild Hunt' subtitle, one of the key aspects of the game will be hunting



"EVERY CHARACTER THAT YOU MEET HAS THE POTENTIAL TO REACT TO PROTAGONIST GERALT IN A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT WAYS"

down and slaying dangerous monsters. Encounters with these creatures – to all intents and purposes, boss battles – can be deliberately sought out by using Geralt's senses to track the creature, or by listening to clues from villagers. Given the freedom you'll have to roam around the game's open world, it's also entirely possible you'll just bump into one. Regardless, there's something appealing about the idea of engaging in epic battles with unique, dangerous creatures, particularly in the wake of dutifully tracking them through the wilderness.

At this point, we inevitably have to wonder what the experience of engaging in combat will be like. CD Projekt Red has intimated that it's made significant adjustments to the combat system since *The Witcher 2*. Presumably in a bid to avoid upsetting its hardcore fans, it's shied away from using the phrase 'more accessible', but we wonder if that is precisely what it will be. We're not sure that's necessarily a bad thing, but it's difficult to say at this point. Hopefully, *The Witcher 3*'s combat will remain challenging and



△OXD The city of Novigrad – the biggest in the game – looks bloody huge and its streets nice and lively.

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

I love Geralt's bouncy hair. I'll be picking up *The Witcher 3* purely for that reason.
@SJHollis

Had it pre ordered for ages. Hoping it'll scratch the itch that kept me scratching an age with *Skyrim* when I was an Xboxer :-)
@PogleWogle

Have only really read about it briefly, but definitely need to find the time to see what it's all about. It looks great!
Sean Markey

Looks excellent. Can't wait for next February.
Paul Rooney



△○×□ Things will change as night falls in *Wild Hunt*, with more dangerous creatures coming out when it gets dark.



△○×□ Taking on these giant beasts is one of the things we're most looking forward to.

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



The vast plains and stunning vistas that we've seen suggest *The Witcher 3* will leverage the power of the PS4.



CD Projekt Red is promising to build on its narrative strengths in presenting us with a mature story.



You will be faced with tough, moral, consequence-laden choices that fall outside of a simple good-versus-bad dichotomy.



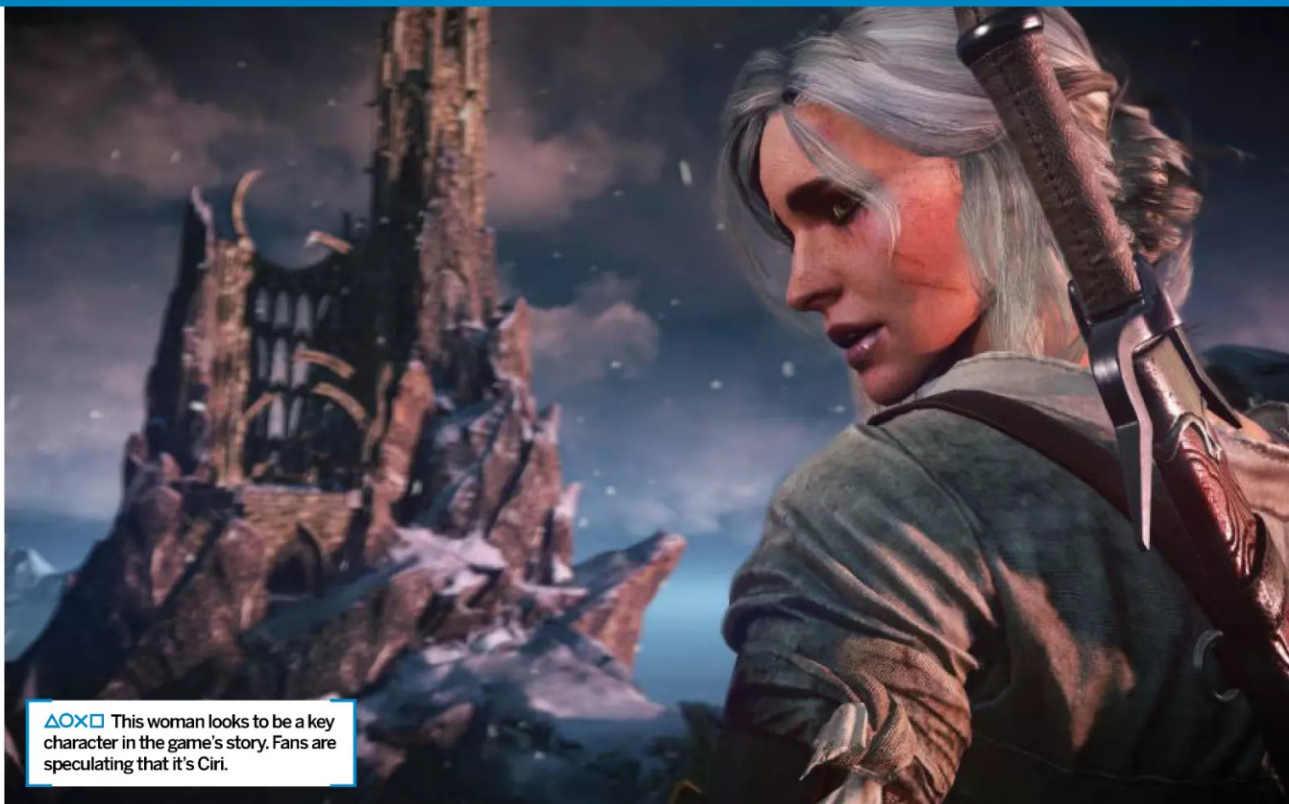
You can take to the seas for the first time in the series, and go diving, if you fancy it.

distinctive, rather than becoming derivative as a result of trying to emulate other titles, as so many games have. At face value, *The Witcher 3*'s combat appears more fluid – a little more action-based and a little less RPG – but only time will tell if that's actually the case.

We sincerely hope that CD Projekt Red finds the right balance in its revamping of *The Witcher*'s combat, because it's already got us eager to start exploring *Wild Hunt*'s world. If the combat that we'll be partaking in whilst travelling from place to place is engaging and distinctive enough to separate it from other titles, then there is a chance that this could turn out to be the best game in the series. Given how well-loved the first two *Witcher* games are, that means it could be very special indeed.

Paul Walker-Emig

If you want to hunt down **THE WITCHER 3** you'll find it being developed at the offices of CD Projekt Red. Check the website for more details: thewitcher.com/witcher3



△○×□ This woman looks to be a key character in the game's story. Fans are speculating that it's Ciri.

ETA 2015 | DEV KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS | PUB KONAMI | TWITTER @KOJIMA_PRO_LIVE

Silent Hills

Ghost of the past



SILENT HILLS IS a Schrödinger's Cat of a game. What do we mean by that? Well, *Silent Hills*' playable teaser, *P.T.*, may very closely resemble the game that *Silent Hills* eventually becomes, or it may be nothing more than a self-contained concept that holds little in common with the final game. Consequently, we may know a lot, or almost nothing about *Silent Hills* – which state we are in won't be determined until we, figuratively, open the box. It might seem odd to suggest that *P.T.* might not resemble the game that it's teasing, but it's worth bearing in mind that it was never described as a demo. Indeed, it could be telling that even *Silent Hills*' latest trailer, shown off at the Tokyo Game Show, was framed as a concept movie.

Nevertheless, we've no choice but to operate on the not-unreasonable assumption that we can at least glean something about the game from what's

didn't leverage that in some fashion. We're even tempted to suggest that *Silent Hills* might end up as a Project Morpheus game, though the mere thought of a virtual reality version of *P.T.* is enough to loosen our bowels.

Despite the similarities between *P.T.* and the new *Silent Hills* trailer, there is a slight difference that's worth expanding on. In *P.T.*, you couldn't 'die' as such. That's in contrast to previous games in the series, where there were enemies to be defeated using the combat system. In *Silent Hills*' latest trailer there is a stronger suggestion of a threat to deal with than there was in *P.T.*, as we see our protagonist chased down by what we can only describe as a giant, disembodied, tentacle-hand-thing. This doesn't mean that there will be combat in the game – indeed, *Silent Hills* may do well to follow the likes of *Amnesia* and *Slender: The Arrival*, titles that have proven that combat is far from necessary in a horror

“THE MERE THOUGHT OF A VIRTUAL REALITY VERSION OF P.T. IS ENOUGH TO LOOSEN OUR BOWELS”

been shown off so far. Firstly, it's notable that the game's latest trailer takes place in a similar location to *P.T.* – it's set in the tight confines of a house, making use of long corridors, blind corners and doors left ajar to give us the willies. This could tell us something about the types of locations in which *Silent Hills* will take place – creepy houses in which traumatic events have taken place in the past. This doesn't necessarily preclude the possibility that we'll also be exploring a town, as in past *Silent Hill* games, but that could be the case.

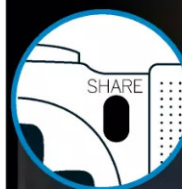
Speaking of the similarities between *P.T.* and the latest trailer, it's significant that both take place in first-person. The *Silent Hill* series has traditionally used a third-person perspective, so it'll be interesting to find out which we'll end up with in the final game, or whether it might even employ a mix of the two. Given the level of terror that *P.T.* is able to create through its smart use of the first-person perspective, we'd be surprised if the final game

game. However, the trailer does at least suggest that you will be directly threatened by hostile creatures in the series' latest iteration.

Even if *Silent Hills* eventually jettisons everything we've seen up to this point in terms of setting and mechanics, one of the most important things about *Silent Hill* (and indeed, horror games in general) is its sense of haunted atmosphere. The twisted horrors that we associate with that series, the creeping terror, the constant sense of unease, have been in evidence in both *P.T.* and the game's latest trailer. That gives us confidence that, whatever direction the game goes in, it's likely to do the thing that it's most important that a *Silent Hill* game does: scare the bejesus out of us.

Paul Walker-Emig

SILENT HILLS is being developed at Kojima Productions' haunted house. Check the website for more details: konami.jp/pt/en



SHARE THIS

SHEER TERROR

Embarrass yourself for our pleasure

Call us sadistic, but there's something incredibly funny about watching someone crap their pants while playing a horror game, whether they're leaping from their seat in reaction to a jump scare, or screwing up their face in horror as the lights cut out. For that reason, we beg you to stream your *Silent Hills* gameplay. A PS4 camera is a must – if we can't see how terrified you are, what's the point?





△○×□ Norman Reedus has given over his likeness for *Silent Hills*, as well as providing the voice for the protagonist.

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



It could reinvigorate one of the most loved and iconic series in PlayStation's history.



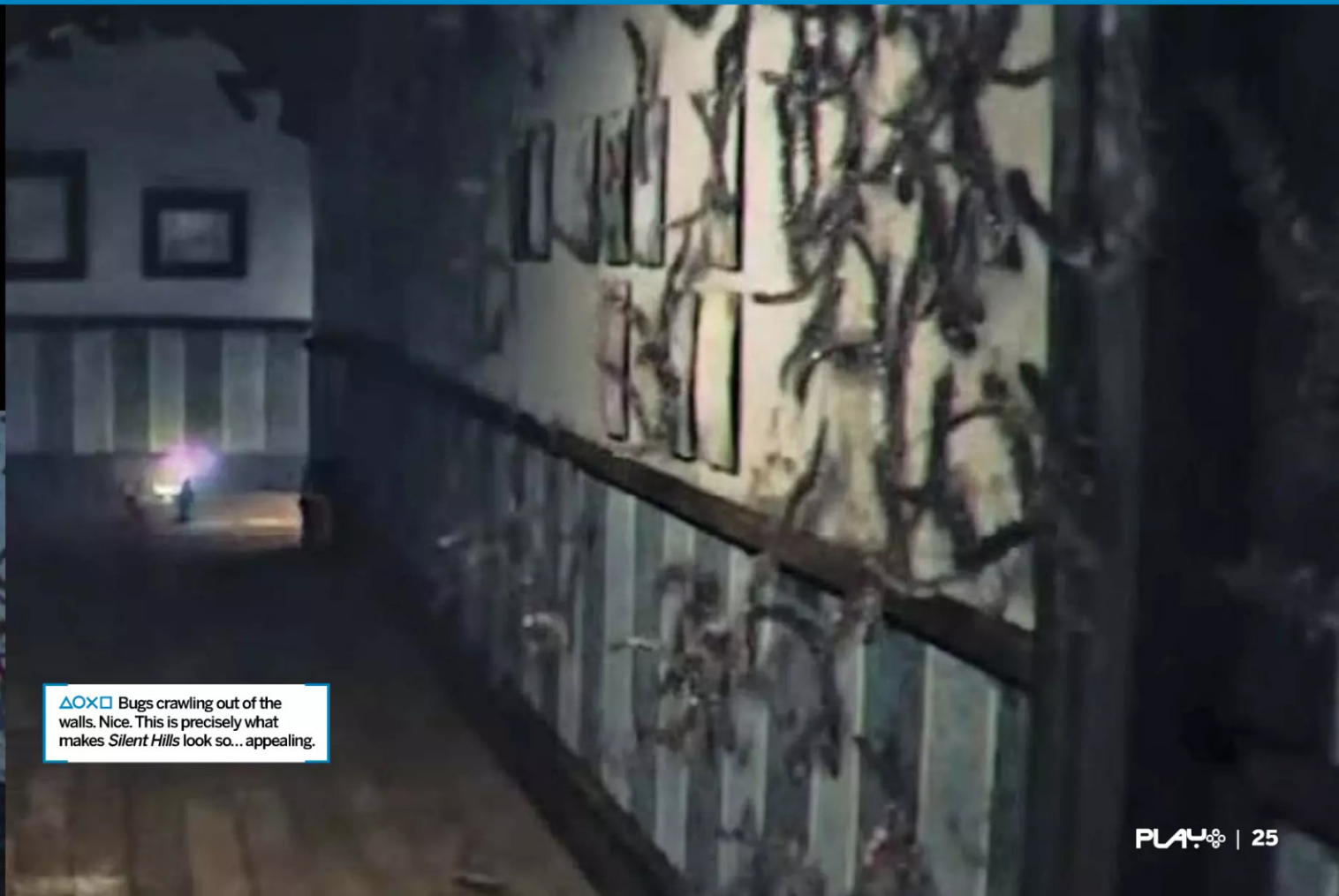
Metal Gear creator Hideo Kojima and great director Guillermo Del Toro are at the helm.



It looks pants-wetingly terrifying – not generally positive, but desirable for horror.



It uses the FOX engine (the one being used for *MGSV:TPP*) and will look brilliant.



△○×□ Bugs crawling out of the walls. Nice. This is precisely what makes *Silent Hills* look so... appealing.

PREVIEW

THE ORDER: 1886

PS4



TWITTER

graphics are stunning but I have a feeling this is going to be another massively over hyped game ala Destiny.

@Mr_W_V_B

great graphics but I feel you will be watching more than playing

@benchyuk

looks stunning and has a great setting. Gameplay looks clunky and tedious at the moment though.

@Higgie_Baby

the #EGX demo made the guns feel underwhelming and game breaking at times :(

@RM_MATHESON

YOUR SHOUT

THE ORDER:
1886

FACEBOOK

Going to be one hell of an awesome game. The trailers are getting better and better.

Michael Jordan

A brilliant concept could be hell of a game

Darren Jones

By god of war ppl. Must buy.

Phil Hall

Looks brilliant, but it's to be seen whether it plays as well as it looks!

Warren Hammond

Looks awesome!

Rob 'Foxeh' Sewell



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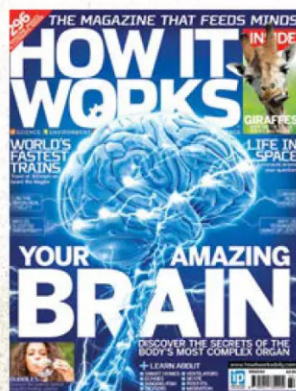
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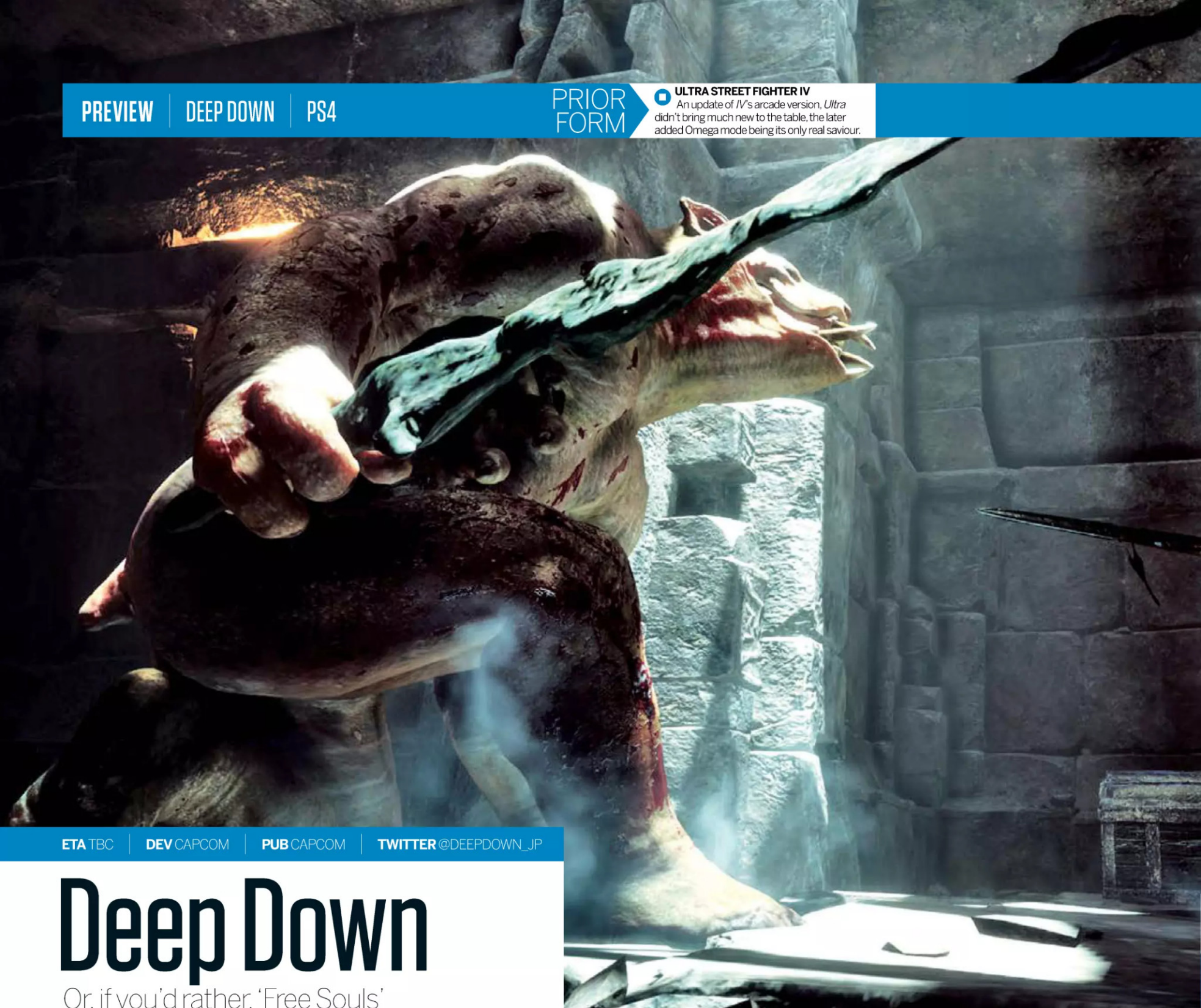
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Deep Down

Or, if you'd rather, 'Free Souls'



CONSIDERING ITS NAME and the filth that is the internet, typing Capcom's working title in the making into any search engine, is at first a worrying prospect. Thankfully, and surprisingly, no resulting

vulgarity surfaces but other dark, intriguing things do.

An RPG/dungeon-crawler with a futuristic twist, *Deep Down* will be an exclusive for the PS4, and one that seems to have a few layers lurking under its *Souls*-esque first impressions. Set in both the distant past and 2094, the game will switch between the two, with the former in a range of monster-laden dungeons and the latter in New York. With a strong sense of an *Assassin's Creed* influence, the New York setting appears to contain a first-person, Animus-style apartment hub, where players will be able to delve into the past by touching artefacts found within.

Of course being able to go into a different era by simply touching things isn't normal, but you won't be playing as an ordinary human being. As a member

of the collective known as the Ravens, you'll have special powers that will not only allow you to go back in time but also read memories of objects by touching them and hear voices of the past. As a member of this elite group, it will be your job – quite literally it would seem – to explore the aforementioned dungeons, in an attempt to uncover the past. A curious spin on the title's genre, *Deep Down* has some interesting concepts surrounding it, which, if fully developed, could make for a stimulating plot line.

Of course these areas aren't going to be smooth sailing; they'll be dangerous, which ultimately means you'll be spending lots of time killing things. These things – which include fire-breathing dragons and grotesque creatures – won't just be in front of you, they'll also appear from the shadows, striking when you least expect it. Cloaked in a dark and foreboding atmosphere, it's this aspect of the game where we're getting our *Souls* impressions from. As for the actual gameplay, you'll be playing in third-person as a knight

from 'ye olden dayes', with spears, swords and shields at your disposal, while magical spells also look to be an intriguing part of your arsenal. Drawing comparisons to Capcom's own *Monster Hunter* series; the action here will be propelled by the developer's new Panta Rhei engine, with the title so far looking impressively realistic as a result, although whether *Deep Down* will gain as much of a cult following as Capcom's excellent monster-bashing series remains to be seen.

What we do know is that this dungeon-crawler won't produce the same place twice. With dungeons being randomly generated, players won't be visiting previous haunts, with enemies, chests and ladder spawns also having endless possibilities. On top of that, various dungeons in the game will also reflect certain feelings of human emotion and, according to executive producer Yoshinori Ono, there are thoughts and 'grudges' scattered around the dungeons that you can also interact with, and if you touch them, you'll be able to see what memories, and presumably emotions,

“A FREE-TO-PLAY GAME WITH GRAND IDEAS. PLAYERS MAY BE WORRIED TO HEAR THOSE WORDS”



△×□ A little like the Animus in *Assassin's Creed*, gameplay involves using relics to explore the past.



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- ▲ Killing monsters with your friends sounds like a whole lot of fun.
- The dark and enigmatic dungeons seem like they'll be filled with various mysteries.
- × It's free! No saving, scrimping or not eating for a week will be required to play this title.
- Without needing a crazy scientist friend, you'll be able to travel through time.

they hold. In addition to this, there's the multiplayer aspect of the game, which will allow players to team up with three other friends and kick some monster ass. Being largely pushed as an online game, Capcom will be dedicating a lot of both time and updates to the service but fear not, a single-player campaign mode will be available for anyone looking to play solo.

A free-to-play game with grand ideas. Players may be worried to hear those words about *Deep Down*, especially since micro-transactions will be a feature. Some may also be sceptical as to the lofty ambitions of the game; the phrase 'too many cooks' springs to mind. However, while Capcom's latest title does appear to be on the rather bold side, we like seeing a well-established company taking a chance on a new IP.

Emma Quinlan

DEEP DOWN is currently in the works at Capcom. Check its Facebook for more details:
www.facebook.com/deepdown.capcom



ETA 2015

DEV UBISOFT MASSIVE

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Tom Clancy's The Division

Follow your Destiny

PS4

EVERY TIME WE hear something new about *The Division* we get a slightly different impression about what exactly the game is and how it will

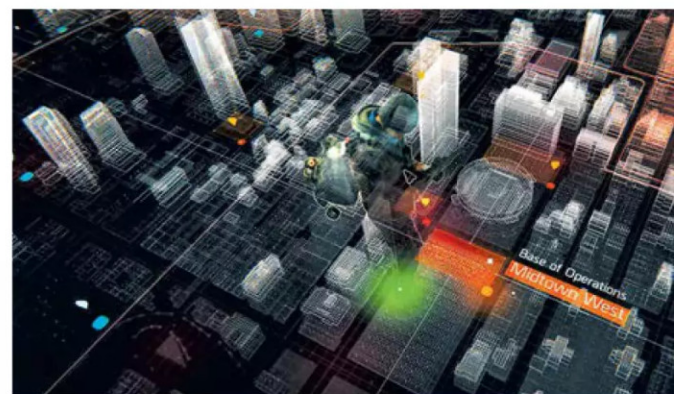
play. In our last issue, we talked about how the game is looking more and more like an RPG. That's not incorrect, per se – there are certainly RPG elements in *The Division*. However, the latest talk coming out of developer Ubisoft Massive places the focus on aspects that make it sound far more like an MMO.

The first sign that *The Division* has got a bit of MMO about it is that it seems it will have a loot system. It almost certainly won't be as central to the game as in *Destiny* and you should not expect to be seeing green, purple and white colour-coded

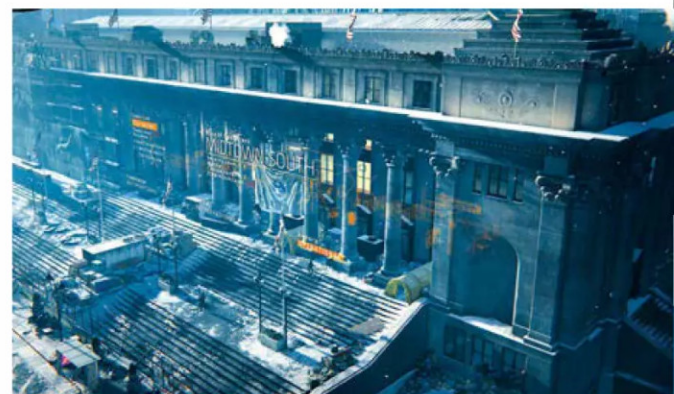
loot tiers. Nevertheless, the game's developers do intend to keep you playing after the story is finished and a steady supply of new items and weapons for you to collect in order to improve your character will be a part of that. So, while there aren't going to be items tagged as being 'legendary' or 'common' as we've seen in other loot-based games, there will be equipment with higher stats that you will naturally be inclined to collect.

Further inspiration seems to have been taken from MMOs in the way that *The Division* approaches PvP combat. The idea of having 'safe zones' where you don't have to worry about being attacked by other human players and areas that are either dedicated to PvP combat, or in which it is possible

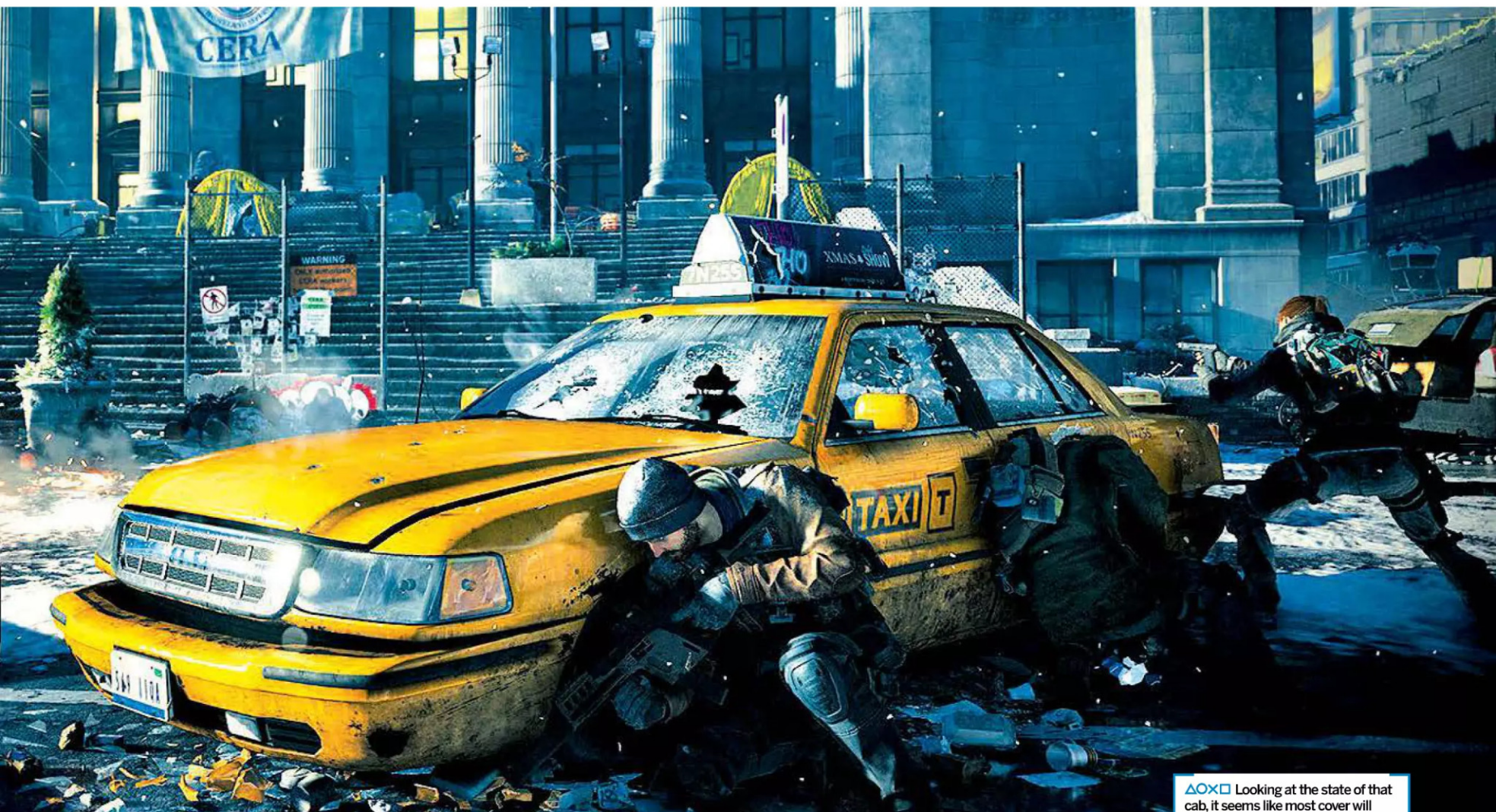
“THE GAME WILL HAVE ‘DARK ZONES’ AND IT'S THESE AREAS THAT ARE DEDICATED TO PVP COMBAT”



AOX Events like these will provide an insight into what New York's citizens have been going through.



AOX Come on, guys – now is not the time to go shopping. We imagine looters will have picked the place dry already anyway...



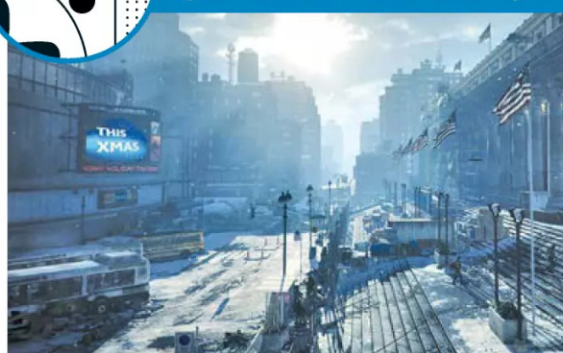
△×□ Looking at the state of that cab, it seems like most cover will have a degree of destructibility.

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- △ Positive actions that you perform will have a visible effect on the world.
- Despite being a shared-world experience, *The Division* will have a narrative thread.
- × If you're away from your PS4, you can jump into *The Division* on a tablet and control a drone.
- It will be possible to upgrade your HQ as you progress through the game.



SHARE THIS



MULTI-SLAYER

Wiping the slate clean

While you could of course share your achievements playing against AI, it's always more impressive when the opponents that you're taking down are human-controlled and therefore unpredictable. Share yourself wiping out an enemy team single-handedly, whether that be using your character's particular skill set or some good old fashioned straight shooting. Sure, the game should be about working with your team, but there's something undeniably satisfying about carrying a team to victory without any assistance.

it can take place, will be familiar to MMO veterans. That's precisely what *The Division* is doing. When you're pottering about in your HQ, or running about doing campaign missions, you're not going to have to worry about suddenly being jumped by rival players. The game will have 'Dark Zones', however, and it's these areas that are dedicated to PvP combat – if you and your buddies want to get a piece of that action, then, all you have to do is open up your map and head for a Dark Zone.

There is one other area where you will encounter other human players and, again, it's a recognisable MMO staple: the social hub. *The Division's* social hub will be separate to the areas in which combat occurs and will be a space where you can interact with other human players, outside of those who are in your party.

It's worth noting that all those players will have their own class (you can see why we've compared *The Division* to both RPGs and MMOs). We don't have a great deal of detail on the game's character classes yet, suffice to say that there's likely to be a character focused on damage dealing, one on support and so on. Ubisoft Massive continues to

emphasise that players of the same class can play the game together, but does say that you'll get the most from working with team-mates who specialise in other areas.

Despite all this talk of *The Division* as an MMO, it's worth mentioning that it still looks very much like the third-person action-heavy shooter we saw when it was revealed. When some people hear the word 'MMO' they instantly think of fiddling around in inventories, farming experience and numbers flashing about all over the shop. That's not what *The Division* is. Rather, it's a game that's seeking to place itself at the vanguard of a new trend in big-budget game design. In other words, it is trying to take advantage of the connected nature of our world by learning from what's worked with MMOs and marrying that with the mainstream, big-budget shooter. *Destiny* has proved that can work. Perhaps *The Division* can pull it off too?

Paul Walker-Emig

THE DIVISION is currently being developed by the clever folks at Ubisoft Massive. Check the website for more details: tomclancy-thedivision.ubi.com/

ANATOMY OF... ATOI

We're going to get to go on another journey with Atoi and Iota when a reworked version of one of the best games on Vita comes to PS4 in the form of *Tearaway Unfolded*...

FORGING NEW PATHS

The Vita version of *Tearaway* was all about going on a journey with Atoi or Iota (whoever you picked), but we won't be completely retracing our steps when we play the game on PS4 – Media Molecule has crafted whole new sections in the game that make use of DualShock 4 features like the lightbar and touchpad.

STYLE ICON

Throughout *Tearaway*, you're asked to create everything from pumpkins to crowns using the game's elegant paper-crafting system and get to see those creations become a feature of the world. That also means you can customise your avatar in any way you see fit – from top hats to demon horns, your imagination is the only limit when it comes to Atoi's appearance.

STEP BY STEP

Surely there's no other character that starts with fewer abilities than Atoi? She can't even jump when you begin the game. Yet, somehow, Media Molecule still manages to keep the game enjoyable with a bare bones skill set. Part of the joy of playing *Tearaway* lies in gaining new abilities for Atoi and delighting at how those abilities are so creatively linked to using the Vita.

ORIGAMING

There's a great feature in *Tearaway* whereby you unlock papercraft models that can be accessed by logging into *Tearaway.me* with your PSN ID. You can then print these models out and follow the instructions to make your own papercraft characters in real life. Good news for any of you fancy having a little Atoi or Iota next to your PS4, or sat at your desk.

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Tearaway: Unfolded

PS4

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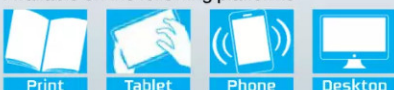


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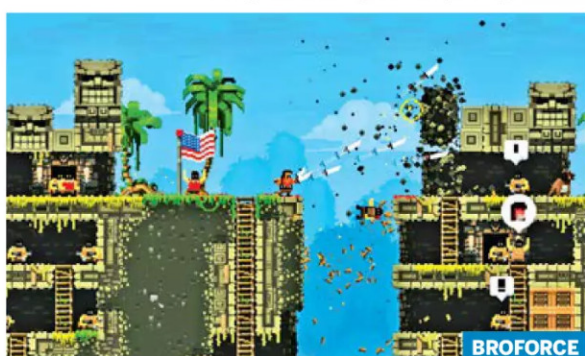
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PREVIEW ROUND-UP



WE'RE PRETTY SURE that **BROFORCE** is going to be awesome when it comes to PS4. Why? Because we've played the alpha on PC and can report that it's not only well crafted and a great deal of fun, but seems like a perfect fit for console. The set-up is this: you start off as Rambro and start shooting your way through the game's destructible environment, taking out enemies on your way to the end of the level. Saving hostages as you progress gives you an extra life, but also unlocks new Bros from the game's huge roster of action-film based characters – Brobocop, Ellen Ripbro, B.A Broracus and so on – each of which has a different weapon and special ability, changing the way you play the game. It's worth mentioning that you switch to a new random Bro every time you save a hostage, keeping the game varied. What we've played of *Broforce* suggests that we're going to have an absolute barnstormer of an action game on our hands when it releases on PS4 early in 2015.

Moving on to a game with a markedly different tone, **LET IT DIE** is a rather disturbing-looking, violent hack-and-slash game being developed by



Suda 51's Grasshopper Manufacture. The game will be free-to-play and seems to be heavily based around customising your character's weapons and appearance. Perhaps the most interesting element of *Let It Die*, though, is the impact that players will have on each other's games. When you die, your character will become an enemy that someone else is going to have to deal with in their game. Presumably, this means that you'll be confronted with a variety of challenges when fighting against former human-controlled characters, depending not only on the level of that character, but on their build in terms of weapons and abilities. It's certainly an good concept and we look forward to finding out more about how it will work in practice and how much scope there is to build characters with distinctive sets of skills.

From a game on which details are sparse to another title we're pretty confident to vouch for: **STARWHAL: JUST THE TIP**. Again, we've had a play of the alpha of this game on PC and it's another one that feels best with a controller in your hand. *Starwhal* is a local multiplayer game where the objective (in the standard game mode, at least) is to pierce the heart of your opponents three times using the tip of your Starwhal's horn, taking them out the game. There are a number of modes that dance around that core concept, offering different ways to play, but that's the basis of it. *Starwhal* elicits laughter, screaming, whoops and all manner of other exclamations – as all great local multiplayer games do – as you bumble around the screen using a control scheme that's slightly cumbersome, in a good way. You can play





STARWHALE: JUST THE TIP



TALES FROM THE BORDERLANDS

against AI, but this game will be best enjoyed with friends when it comes to PS4 and PS3.

And you're going to need some single-player games to play while your friends aren't around, of course. Enter Telltale's **TALES FROM THE BORDERLANDS**, due at the end of this year. Generally speaking, the game looks set to follow the formula that players of Telltale's *The Walking Dead* and *The Wolf Among Us* will be familiar with. In other words, *Tales From The Borderlands* will be released episodically and will include point-and-click elements, conversation trees and choices that impact the way the game's narrative progresses. Given that this is a *Borderlands* game, there will be a little bit of shooty-bang-bang chucked in for a good measure. We're not sure how well that's going to work in a Telltale game, but we'll reserve judgement for now. The game will star two new characters in the form of Rhys and Fiona, though *Borderlands* fans among you should expect to recognise characters from the main games, including certain Vault Hunters.



TALES FROM THE BORDERLANDS

"WE'RE GOING TO HAVE AN ABSOLUTE BARNSTORMER OF AN ACTION GAME ON OUR HANDS"



UNCHARTED 4: A THIEF'S END

IN TERMS OF what we've actually seen of the game, we don't have a great deal to go on other than Nathan Drake's lovely face. In fairness, though, for a series that's thrived on its good looks and a game that's likely to be a showpiece for the PS4, the sheer level of detail that was apparent in that initial reveal is worth mentioning. You can see the pores on his face, scratches, beads of sweat and the small wrinkles of a Nathan Drake who is preparing to embark on his last adventure. Oh, and Naughty Dog has already said that scene – in which we see a battered, bruised and unconscious Drake rise from the floor, load his gun and stride into the rainforest – is in-engine. That means *Uncharted 4* is probably going to look incredible.

Despite the fact that's all we've seen of the game itself so far, there are some more deductions we

can make about *Uncharted 4* in light of concept art shared online. Some of that concept art looks similar in terms of location to what we saw in the *Uncharted 4* trailer. Given that the original teaser trailer for the game showed a map that hovered over Madagascar and Africa's Cape of Good Hope, it seems reasonable to deduce that it is in one of those locations.

In other concept art images, we see an old, ruined and half-submerged city, which Drake is investigating on a jet-ski and some artwork showing fully submerged buildings. It would be tempting to think this is an Atlantis reference, but the buildings are nowhere near old enough for that to be the case. Still, we can surmise that it's possible you'll be doing some diving in *Uncharted 4* in order to discover some lost treasure or other.

AVAILABLE ON: PS4 **RELEASE DATE:** 2015



PS4 EVOLUTION

How your favourite games are better on PS4

HORROR

As players wise up to old tricks and clichés, horror games are changing and finding new ways to scare...

YOU'RE ALONE AND unarmed. A terrifying monster is hunting you. With no weapons or equipment, your only hope is to run – to try to navigate your way out of the creature's labyrinth.

This is *3D Monster Maze*, arguably the first ever horror game, released in the early Eighties for the Sinclair ZX81. By today's standards, it's an antique: over the past 33 years, horror games have evolved in myriad ways, taking advantage of increasingly sophisticated hardware to deliver vivid, bloody scares. But *Monster Maze* was a pioneer of the genre, and directly influenced one of gaming's next horror landmarks.

Originally deployed on PC in 1993, *Doom* was ported two years later to the PlayStation. Lauded for its gory combat and extensive weapons arsenal, *Doom* was also a masterclass in level design. It played on sound and lighting. Sometimes you could hear the monsters, but not see them. Other times you'd be locked in a room with flickering lightbulbs. It would go dark, you'd hear a growl, then suddenly a demon would be standing right in front of you. Jump scares like these have fallen out of favour in recent years – players today expect more subtle, psychological horror games in the mainstream. But for a while on PlayStation, the sudden shock was king.

Take the original *Resident Evil*.

From the dogs bursting in through the hallway windows to that zombie hiding in the cupboard, it was laden with surprising, frightening moments. Today, it's sadly predictable: either through playing the sequels, or absorbing, by osmosis, the stories about *Resident Evil*, everybody knows what to expect. But back then, players had never seen a Hunter.

They had no idea the snake in the loft would be so massive. Even the very first zombie seems to come out of nowhere – on your first playthrough, you'd have been forgiven for thinking he was just some guy with his back to you. With these short, sharp scares, *Resident Evil* spearheaded the idea that games could be frightening. What *Monster Maze* and *Doom* had hinted at, *RE* solidified, providing players and reviewers with marked horror moments they could easily discuss. It also touched on a very important idea, one that remains a cornerstone of good horror to this day: vulnerability. Though you had guns in *Resident Evil*, ammunition was limited; though it was essentially a third-person game, the camera was fixed in certain positions and your character could only move slowly. Design principals like these made sure the player was constantly on the wrong foot. You couldn't always combat danger, nor could you see it coming or easily escape from it if it arrived.

Two more horror staples launched on the PlayStation. Firstly *Hellnight*, an obscure 1998 title by Atlus. Structured a lot like *Monster Maze*, it set the player against an invincible pursuing creature, rendered ever the more terrifying thanks to the PlayStation's 32-bit hardware. But although it built on that important sense of vulnerability, *Hellnight*, sadly, failed to gather momentum. It was never released outside of Japan, and was eventually overshadowed by a true horror experience.

Silent Hill took horror games beyond simple jump scares. It understood how to get inside players' heads, how to use imagery and geography to ramp up the psychological impact. Its key conceit was that the eponymous town, on occasion, would shift from its relatively calm day-time mode into a twisted, nightmare version. Doors that were locked would suddenly be open. Corridors that were empty would now contain monsters. As well as providing some striking visuals, it undermined the player's sense of agency. You could spend hours drumming the map of

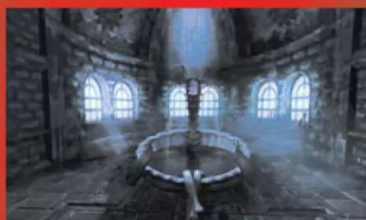
“IN LATE 2005, RESIDENT EVIL 4 CAME ALONG AND RUINED EVERYTHING”

5 THINGS EVERY HORROR GAME NEEDS



DWINDLING SUPPLIES

Give players a gun and a few bullets and they'll quickly realise two things. First, that they're going to be in a fight at some point. Second, that they're going to struggle like hell to win it.



WEIRD LOCATIONS

A good trick is to take a normal looking place – a house, a hospital, a suburban town – and twist it. You take a place players think they understand, and then mess it (and them) up royally.



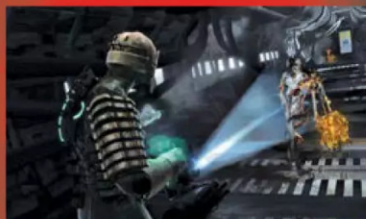
DANGEROUS ENEMIES

If you make enemies invincible players know they can just run and hide, diminishing the fear. Instead, you want tough, strong opponents who can be killed but won't go down without a fight.



STINGY SAVE POINTS

In a horror game, you need to feel like if you die, you're going to lose something. So, checkpoints and save points have to be sparse. When death means losing an hour of progress, it all gets tense.



BUMPS IN THE NIGHT

Throw people off with sudden, ambient noises. *Alien: Isolation* and *Dead Space* are both great examples. They keep players constantly guessing about where or when an enemy might strike.



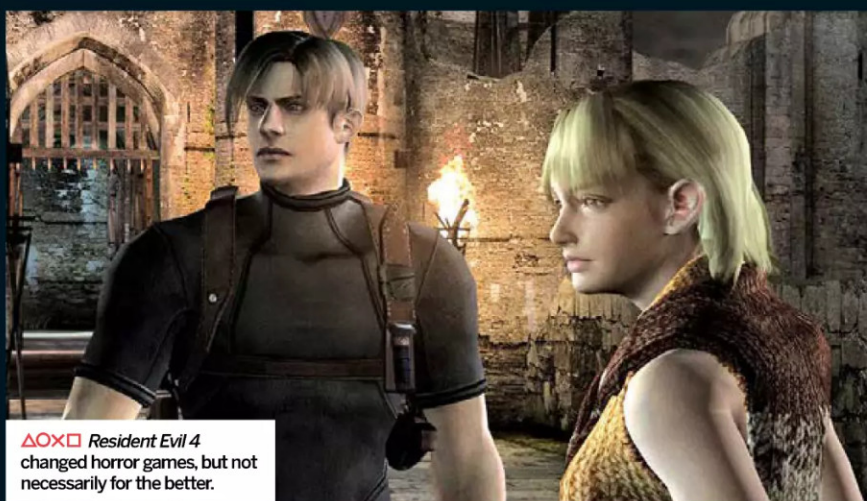
Silent Hill into your head only to watch it inexplicably change before your eyes. Suddenly, miraculously, you were in a new world and that sense that you could navigate your way from danger was lost. In later games, particularly *Silent Hill 2*, the monster designs were specified to reflect your character's personality. The iconic Pyramid Head for example – a representation of your character's repressed sexual urges – carries a large sword, which he uses to repeatedly stab *Silent Hill 2*'s living mannequins and terrifying nurses. Far and away from cheap jump scares, by this time, around 2003, frightening games had started to infiltrate the mind.

And in the early days of the PS2, psychological horror thrived. The *Silent Hill* series continued in earnest thanks to *Silent Hill 3*, while Capcom launched *Killer7*, a slow, difficult game which focused less on combat and more on labyrinthine narrative. *Doom*, by now, was a distant memory. The early years of the PS2 were dominated by titles where fighting – or at least winning – was rarely an option. *Project Zero* got with this trend, as did *Forbidden Siren*. These games all engaged the player's flight rather than fight response. Even when they weren't directly screwing with your head, they were forcing you to think rather than act. *Manhunt* was the master of this. By providing you with both weapons and a procession of killable goons, it masqueraded as a straight-up combat game. But confrontation invariably ended with your death, and to do things properly, you had to plan and concentrate much more than in your standard third-person shooter.

Then, in late 2005, *Resident Evil 4* came along and ruined everything. It was a great game – varied, original, mechanically progressive – but it was orientated around action. Compared to early *Resident Evil*, where players would kill maybe 20-30 enemies the entire game, a playthrough of *Resi 4* would end with a body count of around 900. Guns were plentiful and the focus now was on twitch reflexes and sharp-shooting – this was a physical rather than mental test.



ΔOX□ A cluttered, noisy horror shooter, the original *Resistance* was a lesser by-product of *Resident Evil 4*.



ΔOX□ *Resident Evil 4* changed horror games, but not necessarily for the better.



GAME CHANGER: RESIDENT EVIL 4



It's one of the greatest, most intelligent games ever made, but *Resident Evil 4* changed horror for the worse. Its enormous success inspired other developers to try and copy its style, leading to a string of 'action-horror' games that more or less ditched fear in favour of guns and combat. Also, it set the *Resident Evil* series, which previously had focused on puzzles, evasion and slow-paced exploration, down a completely new path, culminating in the humdrum *Resident Evil 5* and the disastrous *Resident Evil 6*. On the flip side, by 2010, the action-horror genre that *RE4* had inspired was so pervasive that independent developers formed a kind of backlash, launching titles like *Amnesia* and *Outlast* and providing the foundations for some of the best horror games to date, the aforementioned *Alien Isolation* and cult classic *Metro: Last Light*. Just as *Spec Ops* owes its existence to the likes of *Call Of Duty*, the genuinely frightening horror games of today are indirect products of *RE4*'s influence.



△×□ We would seriously throw hundreds of pounds at Capcom for a full HD remake of *killer7* on PS4...

Subsequently, horror suffered. Alongside the PlayStation 3, *Resistance: Fall Of Man* launched in 2006, and it signalled just how far off course scary games had been led, how the huge success of *RE4* had convinced developers that action and noise were where the horror genre should go. Relentless, chaotic and loud, *Resistance* had an almost fetishistic focus on weapons. Intent on arming players to the teeth, then setting them loose against waves

in these games, some niggling worry that you might be overwhelmed by the monsters, but for the most part, real fear had given way to blithe, repeated shooting.

So, as in 1993, when *Doom* first landed on the Apple II, it was down to the PC to kickstart the genre. Frictional Games, out of Sweden, launched *Amnesia* in 2010. In survival horror tradition, it dropped players into a maze-like castle and pitted them against an invincible monster. Once again, success was down to brains rather than brawn. The idea was to run

"SILENT HILL TOOK HORROR BEYOND JUMP SCARES. IT KNEW HOW TO GET INSIDE A PLAYER'S MIND"

of enemy creatures, *Resistance* shared a lot of creative ground with *Gears Of War*, which was doing well on the Xbox 360. These types of games – soon dubbed 'action-horror' – quickly became the norm and for a long time, thanks to a slew of uninspired titles like *Dead Space* and *F.E.A.R.*, horror games floundered. Scares, in the true sense, had been replaced with a loose kind of tension. There was still some atmosphere

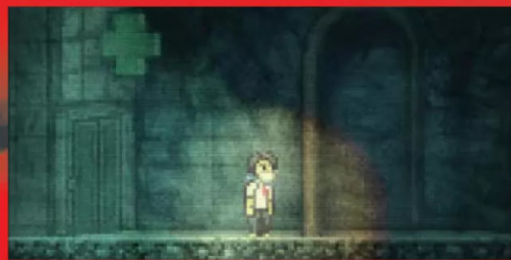
and hide from the creature, using locks on doors and natural barriers to create an escape route. Over the next couple of years, *Amnesia* spawned a few imitators, most notably *Slender*, based on the internet myth of Slenderman, and these games would eventually influence developers on the PlayStation. It's still orientated around action, but *The Last Of Us* encourages players to rely more on their wits than their weapons. Some of the enemies cannot be

PS3 INSPIRATION



THE LAST OF US

A perfect mix of combat and horror, *The Last of Us* forces players to go up against horrifying enemies. It also has some of the best sound design in horror game history. Who doesn't wince at the screams of the Runners, or the ominous squeaks of the Clickers?



LONE SURVIVOR

Lone Survivor takes trippy visuals to another level. It's variously implied that the nightmarish world the character inhabits doesn't exist, and that he may be in a coma, an asylum or perhaps even dead. It's a game which understands the value of subtle, unnerving scares.



LIMBO

On dozens of occasions, you walk through *Limbo* and are suddenly, almost unfairly, killed. It isn't even a case of keeping your wits about you. This is a horror game that works because it's relentlessly punishing – everything you do feels futile and leaves you on edge.

△○×□ Zombies are a lot scarier when they're not built out of a few hundred triangles. PS4 horror games will be genuinely terrifying.



directly engaged – the idea is to be careful, to plan, to treat confrontation as a last resort. Launching in 2013, it was the first truly scary console game in a decade, and it set the mould for the immediate future.

Circa 2010, *Amnesia* was what the horror genre needed: a potent, defiant return to the player-unfriendly values of *3D Monster Maze*. But already it, and imitators like *Outlast*, have started to wear. When you face a monster that you can't harm, the fear factor, paradoxically, is diminished. There's a weird safety in knowing you always have to run – it's assuring being told you will never have to confront your pursuer. *The Last of Us*, on the contrary, struck a balance. Vulnerable though you were, you were nevertheless required to get into fights. It was scary because it didn't promise to look after you. There wasn't the guarantee of a hiding place or a way out.

On PS4, horror games in this vein are already starting to emerge. *Alien: Isolation* gives you some weapons, but only enough to defend yourself, barely, from the human and robotic enemies – nothing that

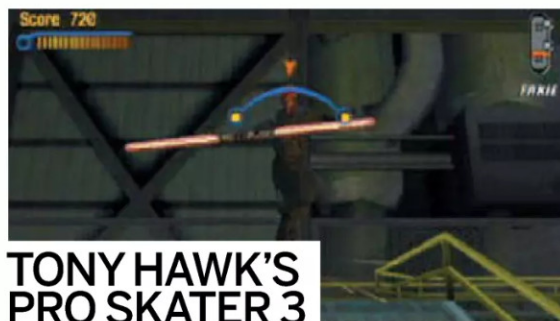
can kill the alien itself. Likewise, *The Evil Within* is an atmospheric, claustrophobic experience. Similar to the old *Resident Evils*, the camera hangs at unhelpful angles, too close to your character, and your movement is slow and heavy. Combat still occurs but you have very few bullets. This is a game where you're forced to defend yourself but often will struggle to do so.

And that's how horror has evolved. It's ended up somewhere between those first two landmarks: *3D Monster Maze* and *Doom*. The fear is still heavily implied – players will find themselves outmatched and under-equipped – but it's counter-weighted by smart combat mechanics. Like MacReady, venturing into the snow to hunt down the Thing, today's horror developers know that what's most frightening is being forced to confront, physically, your worst nightmare.



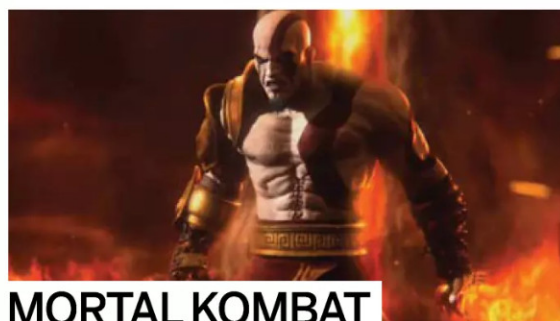
TOP TEN CROSSOVERS

WHETHER IT'S A MINOR CAMEO FROM A WELL-KNOWN CHARACTER, OR A FULL-BLOWN MASH-UP OF TWO ICONIC SERIES, THERE'S SOMETHING APPEALING ABOUT THE IDEA OF SEEING TWO SEPARATE FICTIONAL UNIVERSES COLLIDE. WE'VE CAST OUR MINDS BACK OVER THE YEARS TO BRING YOU SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE VIDEOGAME CROSSOVERS



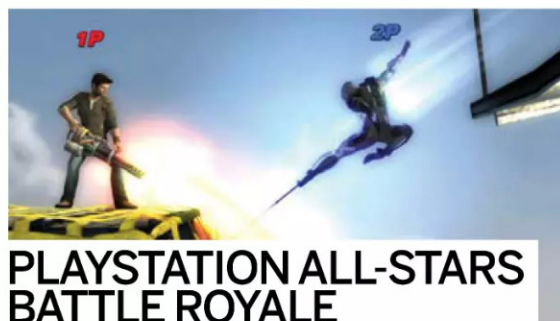
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

THE TONY HAWK'S *Pro Skater* series has had a few crossover characters in its history. If you 100 per cent *THPS2* with a created character, you are rewarded with a playable Spider-Man (we reckon he'd be good at skating). *THPS3* continues the tradition, with Wolverine and Darth Maul both appearing as unlockable characters. We don't know if Wolverine would be as good as Spider-Man, but he'd at least recover swiftly from bails.



MORTAL KOMBAT

THIS WON'T BE the last fighting game on our list that features a character from another series, but it's probably the one where the character being drafted in fits the series the best. Who better for the brutal, fetishised festival of violence that is *Mortal Kombat* than *God Of War*'s vicious, raging protagonist, Kratos? These two gratifiers of all things gory are the perfect fit for one another – it's a marriage made in psychopath's heaven.



PLAYSTATION ALL-STARS BATTLE ROYALE

WHILE IT MIGHT not be the best game on our list – though it deserves more love than it gets – it's impossible to talk about videogame crossovers without mentioning *PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale*. The iconic Big Daddy from *BioShock*, *Devil May Cry*'s Dante, Cole MacGrath from *InFamous*, Raiden from *Metal Gear Solid* and, of course, the mighty Parappa are just some of the characters that make up the game's star-studded roster.



LARA CROFT AND THE GUARDIAN OF LIGHT

THERE ARE A few references to the *Legacy Of Kain* series in *Tomb Raider* – a portrait of Kain is hung in the Croft manor in *Anniversary*, *Legend* and *Underworld*, for example. Square Enix went all in on the crossover with DLC for *Guardian Of Light*, though, giving players the opportunity to play the game as Raziell and Kain, complete with dialogue lifted from the *Legacy Of Kain* games. What more could a *Legacy Of Kain* fan want?



SOULCALIBUR V

SOULCALIBUR HAS had loads of crossover characters over the years – Yoda and Darth Vader from *Star Wars*, Heihachi from *Tekken*, Link from *Legend Of Zelda* – but we've picked *Assassin's Creed*'s Ezio in *SoulCalibur V* as the definitive one. Ezio doesn't get the nod simply because *Assassin's Creed* is a huge series, but because *SoulCalibur* is a historical fighting game based on melee combat and that's a perfect fit for Ezio.



EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING

THIS GAME WAS rubbish, but that doesn't change the fact that it had a brilliant crossover. It makes no sense whatsoever, but *Evolution Skateboarding* allows you to play as *Metal Gear Solid*'s Snake. Not only that, the game has a level based on Big Shell – the oil rig in which *Metal Gear Solid 2* takes place. The takeaway here is, if you want to ensure that **Play** is on board with what you're doing, just put Snake in it.



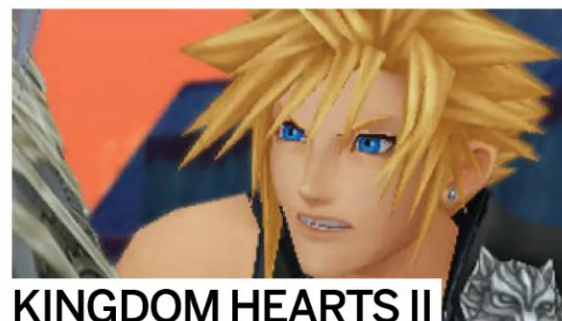
ASURA'S WRATH

YOU'VE JUST MADE one of the most ridiculous, over-the-top games ever released in the form of *Asura's Wrath*, a game in which you destroy a planet-sized god by uppercutting his finger – what the hell do you do for DLC? Bring *Street Fighter*'s Ryu and Akuma into the fold, of course. The fights between Asura, Ryu and Akuma are gloriously silly (Asura smashes Ryu through space and into another planet, to give you one example), their epic scale dovetailing perfectly with the game's excessive style. Those spectacular fights earn *Asura's Wrath's Street Fighter* crossover DLC a more than respectable place in our top ten.



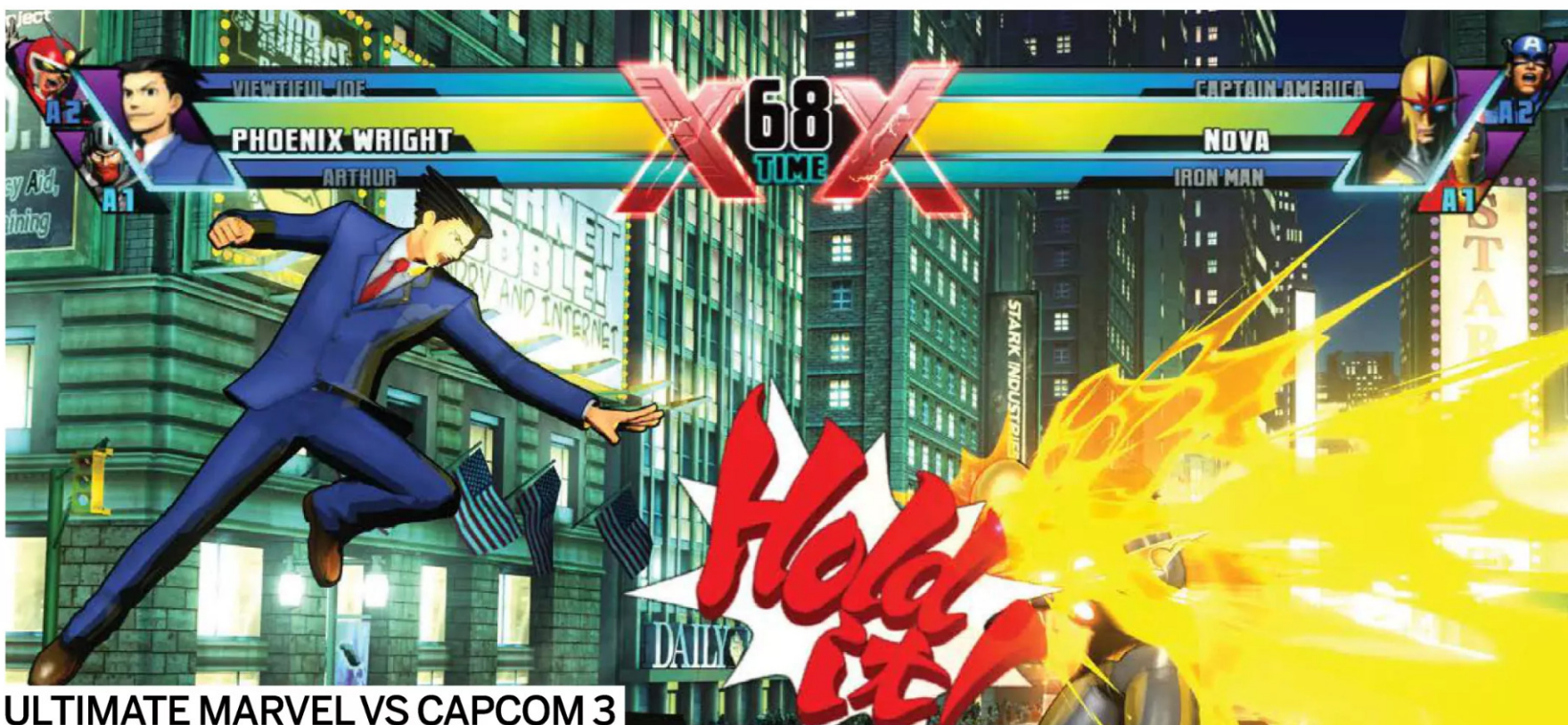
METAL GEAR SOLID: PEACE WALKER

HAVING ALREADY ESTABLISHED our love of all things *Metal Gear*, *Peace Walker* naturally gets a place on our list, courtesy of its tie-in with *Monster Hunter*. After meeting a Felyne in one of the game's side missions, you unlock a series of hunting quests that allow you to go after creatures from the *Monster Hunter* series as Snake. The first of these pits you against a Rathalos, the second a Tigrex and the final mission pits you against Gear REX, a mutated dragon-like creature that was made specifically for the *Metal Gear* and *Monster Hunter* crossover missions. Just look at the image and try telling us this isn't a great crossover.



KINGDOM HEARTS II

THIS GAME IS absolutely bursting with characters from a host of films, games and TV shows. There's Donald Duck and Goofy, Scar from *The Lion King*, Jack Sparrow from *Pirates Of The Caribbean* and Fa Mulan from *Mulan* (obviously), all from the Disney stable. Then there's the *Final Fantasy* lot – Cloud, Tifa and Sephiroth from *FFVII*, Squall from *FFVIII*, Auron from *FFX* and Vivi from *FFIX*, to name a few. As well as being brilliant as fan service, by virtue of its huge roster of crossover characters, *Kingdom Hearts II* is also an excellent game in a much loved series. That makes this RPG more than deserving of a place on our list.



ULTIMATE MARVEL VS CAPCOM 3

WHO WOULD WIN in a fight between Ryu and Thor? She-Hulk and Akuma? Spider-Man and Dante? Before *Marvel Vs Capcom*, these battles could only take place on the hypothetical battleground where Batman is locked in eternal struggle with Superman, Bruce Lee combats Jackie Chan and Arnie slugs it out with Stallone. The *Marvel Vs Capcom* series gave us an outlet for those formerly hypothetical conflicts, pitting two iconic rosters of characters against each

other. From Wolverine to Mike Haggar, Iron Man to Chun-Li, there are just so many brilliant characters to choose from. The ostentatious *Marvel Vs Capcom 3* also happens to be one of the most loved games within its genre. That fact, in combination with its excellent roster, earns it a place at the top of our list. We've chosen the *Ultimate* version of *Marvel Vs Capcom 3* to fly the flag for the series due to its expanded roster (okay, it's because it's got Phoenix Wright in it).



FEATURE

BLOODBORNE

25 REASONS TO LOVE

BLOODBORNE

We delve deeper into the PS4 Souls follow-up in search of the logic behind the hype



1 DEMON'S SOULS REFERENCES?!

The recent alpha test was promptly shut down when several testers worked out how to glitch out of the prescribed play area and into content that wasn't supposed to be made public. Among these was one particular area where an NPC/boss used the word 'Umbasa' – the *Demon's Souls* equivalent of 'Praise The Sun!'. Could this mean that *Bloodborne* is set in the same universe, or is this just From Software chucking in a reference for the benefit of its long-term fans?

2 MID-COMBO WEAPON TRANSFORMATIONS

Each weapon has two forms, one that tends to offer quick swings and relatively low damage while an enhanced form adds to damage, range or speed depending on the weapon type. The best part of this system is the ability to tap L1 mid-combo and go from one stance to the other on the fly – you can end a regular attack string with a powerful hammer finisher, for instance, and we can't wait to see what expert players learn to do with the system. The combo videos are going to be crazy...

3 MOTION CONTROLS THAT ACTUALLY WORK

Don't worry, you're not going to be going anywhere near a Move controller for a game as precise as this. What you *can* do is use simple gestures and controller flicks to trigger the ever-popular emotes of the *Souls* games. There's a new set to embrace here, our favourite so far being the cape pop – perhaps the most badass move possible, even if it doesn't appear to remove any of the ludicrous amounts of blood that paints your character as you hack your way through hordes of enemies.



4 ATTACK TO DEFEND

Watching an enemy cheekily lop off half your health in one lucky blow is never much fun, but here, you get to do something about it. Like in tag fighters like *Marvel Vs Capcom*, some damage dealt by enemies is recoverable. In those games, it's about tagging out to let the character recover; in this case, quick retaliation against the foe who wounded you will return a little life. Not a huge amount, but enough to keep you alive a little longer...

5 CO-OP MADE EASY

Multiple flavours of Soapstone have meant that the *Souls* co-op experience has never exactly been an easy or obvious one, but that's something the team is looking to rectify. We got to try out three new bell items – one for summoning other players, one for offering your own services to others and one for severing ties and going back to playing solo. We're sure there will be additional options and items in the final game, but this is a solid start.

6 ESTUS CRUTCH REMOVED

Especially towards the end of the game after you had grabbed a few upgrades, Estus healing started to become something that people would rely upon rather than a last-ditch lifeline. But no longer – the only healing items we've seen in *Bloodborne* are consumables (akin to *Demon's Souls*) and while they don't exactly seem to be rare, use up your entire collection and you're going to be screwed. That should stop the heal-spammers.



7 NO SHIELD? NO PROBLEM!

Much has been made of the more offensive loadout of *Bloodborne*'s heroes compared to their plank-bearing *Souls* counterparts. Parry lovers need not fear, however, because while it might not let you put a decent guard up, your gun can function in much the same way as a trusty buckler – land a perfectly timed shot to counter an incoming blow and you'll leave your attacker wide open for a devastating critical strike.

8 RAGDOLL SILLINESS

While we're somewhat glad to see the removal of the broken English congratulatory messages to offer a more refined experience, there's still an odd pleasure to be found in the return of the old corpse ragdoll from older *Souls* games. 'YOU DEFEATED' was good and all, but running around booting a werewolf corpse all over the place is a far more rewarding (and stupid) ceremony than those two ill-chosen words could ever offer. If you miss them that much, you can still just shout them.

9 MOBS ARE DEADLY

In making regular enemies disappear after a set number of kills, *Dark Souls II* made it perfectly clear that its grunts were not the focus and that bosses (and other players) were all you really needed to worry about. That attitude will get you *murdered* in *Bloodborne* – tackle a large group of foes at once and you're likely to suffer. Pick off the stragglers and plan your approach carefully, because anything can kill you, and quickly.

10 NO SOULS

Here's an odd one, because we're not sure *Bloodborne* will actually follow in the RPG footsteps of its forerunners if the omission of Souls (or similar experience-based currency) carries over to the full release. It levels the playing field, sure, but in doing so would make the game more a pure action experience akin to the likes of *Revengeance* and *Devil May Cry* – tough company to be keeping. Does From have the balls to try its luck?

11 AMMO IS IN SHORT SUPPLY

Those expecting to be able to blast their way to victory are in for a shock. *Bloodborne*'s guns hit far less hard than you might expect, plus ammo is in pretty short supply, making them best used for smart interruptions and punishing counter attacks or safe killing blows.

12 FIST FIGHTERS WELCOME

'Onebros' who have punched their ways through entire *Souls* games will be delighted to hear that the same potential exists in *Bloodborne* – tap right on the D-pad and you'll stow your main weapon and instead resort to swiping at enemies with your bare hands. This also hints at the possibility of having multiple weapons equipped...

13 WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!

We've long championed the idea of playing *Souls* games blind the first time through – that is to say, don't look anything up online and don't go asking for help until you've at least done enough on your own steam to see the credits. The same is true here, too. We don't want to know what that big insect thing is until either we've killed it or it has killed us.

14 YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Sure, there are phantoms of other player-controlled hunters, but one thing that caught us off-guard was an AI-controlled hunter who seemed to have just as much beef with Yharnam's riff-raff as we did. He seemed happy to wail on a bunch of werewolf things of his own accord and left us alone when it was over. So we hit him to see what would happen. It didn't end well. Don't do that.

15 THOSE MONSTER HUNTER FEELS

Stuck on a *Souls* boss? Grind a fair bit and you'll do a lot better. But with that aspect seemingly removed, you're left with an experience far closer to Capcom's *Monster Hunter* franchise, where learning your own weapon's potential and enemy attack patterns is far more important than grinding until you can squeak past a troublesome boss. Grab *Freedom Unite* on Vita to prepare yourself for the hardships that await...

16 UNLIMITED ENEMIES

Gone are the days when you could bang your head against an area until it was empty – *Dark Souls II*, this is not. Every time you die, a full complement of enemies will return to their rightful place, and you'll have to carve a new path through the horror in order to progress. It sounds brutal, and it is, but it's the kind of thing that encourages better, more cautious play. We're all for that.

17 UNIQUE ANIMATIONS

It's a simple little touch but one of our favourite things from our time with *Bloodborne* was the way that every nuance has its own visual cue. Fail to clock that you've got no Blood Vials (health potions, effectively) left and try to use one anyway, for instance, and you're treated to a special animation where your hunter reaches for their belt but seems surprised to find nothing left.



18 LOOT IS NOT DEAD

The same accidental leak that turned up the *Demon's Souls* references also confirmed that new weapons and armour will be collectable in the world of *Bloodborne*. We've still not caught a glimpse of a menu but we do know that new gear can be found, likely coming with bespoke perks that make each costume or weapon a good fit for a certain kind of enemy.

19 IMPROVED MESSAGE SYSTEM

When first introduced, the *Souls* series' message system was hugely open to abuse. A one-option rating system didn't help matters much (misleading messages can be pretty funny, after all), leading to *Bloodborne*'s system – you're still free to leave notes for other players, but these can be branded 'Fair' or 'Foul' by others, meaning it should be a little easier to see when somebody is trolling and when they're being genuinely helpful.

20 TRULY HORRIFIC ENEMIES...

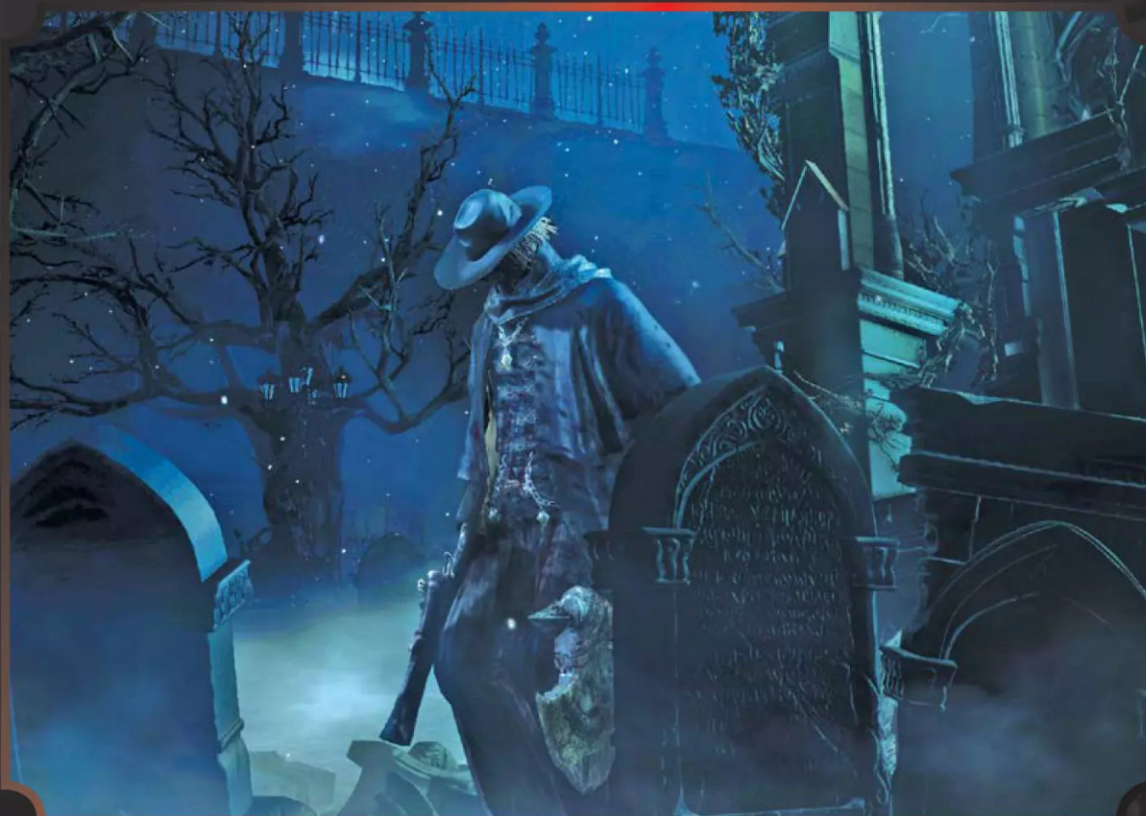
There are two transitions that will really help *Bloodborne* freak players out – the leap from PS3 to PS4 and the switch from a fantasy setting to a gothic one. The tone is darker than anything we've seen From Software do before and even the hooded mobs and dogs that patrol the streets are terrifying, let alone the broken-legged giant crows, werewolves and hulking, brick-wielding maniacs.

21 ...AND BOSSES ARE EVEN WORSE

We've fought some nasty bosses in our time but the Cleric Demon had us on edge for the entire fight. It's partly the flailing hair and tendrils, partly the brutal swipes and leaps that can easily end lives but in truth, it's mostly its scream. The hairy beast has a piercing cry that is first heard as you climb a nearby ladder but while fighting it, you won't be able to hear anything else. We're already traumatised...

22 DODGE, DUCK, DIP, DIVE, DODGE!

No, you won't be playing dodgeball or having to avoid tossed wrenches. This has more to do with *Bloodborne*'s enhanced arsenal of evasive techniques. Makes sense, given the lack of a block button, but it still feels novel every time we slink away from damage with a perfectly timed swoop – based on context, you may roll, slide or dash from danger and it's only going to get more rewarding as we learn the full nuance of the evasive system.



23 SOULS COMES OF AGE

From's games might have hit main stage status but that doesn't mean they're polished, professional products – if anything, part of the charm of the *Souls* series has been the daft hints at the franchise's obviously low production values. Presentation has never been a strong point... until now. A new generation of hardware and dare we say a possible cash injection from Sony (the game is PS4 exclusive...) make this the most professional product From has ever created.

24 BEAST TRANSFORMATIONS

Yharnam's plight is well documented – its residents are one by one becoming monsters but are themselves oblivious to the fact, instead turning on those who condemn them. It's rumoured that this beastly takeover could even extend to player characters, and one boss turned up by the misadventures in the alpha himself transforms mid-battle, suggesting that this theme will see a lot more action and in turn offering a potentially cool twist on the game's inevitable PvP encounters. Beast mode activate!

25 DON'T TRUST THE FOG

Dark Souls used fog gates to signpost upcoming boss battles, while the sequel toyed with their use so it wasn't so clear when a big fight might be coming. In *Bloodborne*, there's no warning – at least not the first time a boss drops by. They'll do literally that, appearing out of nowhere to challenge you as you stand, but should you die, that classic fog gate will still appear to lock off the area and remind you that you should have been on your toes first time around.

DESERT ISLAND GAMES

To celebrate our 250th issue, we came up with a novel twist on a classic idea. Here's the setup: you get exactly 250% to 'spend' on a handful of games you'll play for the rest of time, with each game costing its **Play** review score. Check out what our team and contributors picked out...



How would YOU spend 250%?
Check the Playlist on page 94 and let us know on Twitter @PlayMag_UK



LUKE ALBIGÉS

ROCK BAND 3
84% - ISSUE 199

Given that I have a catalogue of about 500 imported and downloaded additional songs, I'm pretty confident I could happily play *Rock Band 3* until the end of recorded time and never get bored. Or at least until I snapped yet another foot pedal playing the drums to Toxicity on Expert. I'm taking the full band setup too, so I'm always ready for spontaneous co-op fun.

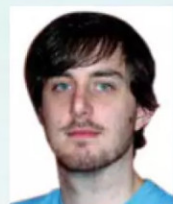
MONSTER HUNTER FREEDOM UNITE
77% - ISSUE 181

The fact that I've put more than 300 hours into *Freedom Unite* already but would still take it as part of my arbitrarily tiny game collection speak volumes about my love for this game. Sadly, nobody else picked it so I'll be stuck playing solo. Well, unless I can get some AdHoc Party action on the go and get online...

DIABLO III
89% - ISSUE 235

I'd rather have *Ultimate Evil Edition* on PS4, but I foolishly screwed myself over with the additional 3% I gave the game when I reviewed it a few issues back. Still, even the vanilla version will keep me going for a long, loot-packed time. Knowing my luck, though, I'd play it forever and somehow *still* not manage to get a Mask Of Jeram for my Witch Doctor. Sigh.





ADAM BARNES

LITTLEBIGPLANET 2

96% - ISSUE 201

By having this one I won't *really* need any other games; *LBP2* will give me access to a host of creations and while a large portion are going to be cack, it'll at least be something new to try. I could spend my time making my own levels – and become good at it, too – and who knows, I might actually get the Platinum...

TRANSPORT TYCOON

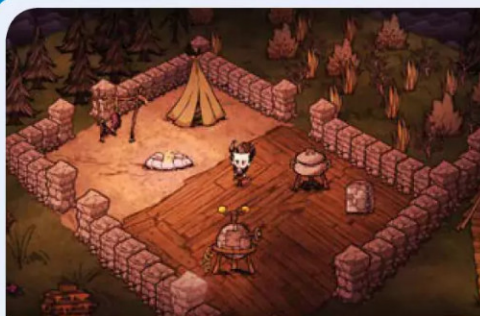
78% - ISSUE 24

Now, this one should've scored a lot higher, but I'm not complaining. I had a couple of personal choices when it came to never-ending games: *Civilization II*, *X-Com Enemy Unknown* (or its PS3 reboot), *SimCity 2000* or even *The Sims 3*. Ultimately I went for managing a transportation business, mostly to feed my OCD.

GUITAR HERO: GREATEST HITS

76% - ISSUE 182

I'll be honest, I'd kind of made my choice – this was just filler and of all the 76% games it seemed like the best option. It was either that or the expansive RPG *Sacred 2* and, while I'd enjoy that, it's not quite a *Final Fantasy Tactics* game – I'd quickly lose interest. So I settled for the worst *Guitar Hero* game, which is still better than no *Guitar Hero* game.



PAUL WALKER-EMIG

DON'T STARVE

81% - ISSUE 240

Survival games are effectively infinite – as far as I'm concerned, that makes the brilliant *Don't Starve* an ideal choice for a scenario in which I'm going to be playing a small number of games for the rest of my days.

HITMAN HD TRILOGY

75% - ISSUE 230

How could I resist the temptation of three games in one, especially at only 75%? The classic that is *Hitman: Blood Money* is naturally the highlight of the package, but I'll not turn my nose up at *Hitman 2: Silent Assassin* and *Hitman: Contracts*.

PERSONA 4 GOLDEN

94% - ISSUE 228

I'm not normally a completionist, but after playing the game through, I can jump into New Game+ to focus on maxing out every social link, getting every character to the maximum level and collecting every Persona in the game – a not-insignificant task.



LIAM WARR

RED DEAD REDEMPTION

92% - ISSUE 193

I could spend days riding a horse around the desert, running away from wolves, and drinking shots of rum at the bar and trying (and failing) to wander over to the poker table for some cards. And that's before I've even put the disc in the machine.

TRIALS FUSION

80% - ISSUE 244

It's quite known around the office that I am frigging *boss* at *Trials*. So why the hell wouldn't I take this to the Play Island? Hopefully I'll eventually complete Inferno III with no faults and finally get one of the last remaining platinum scores.

BRIAN LARA CRICKET

78% - ISSUE 43

You obviously need a sports game, and being left with 78% didn't really leave me with any good *FIFA* options. But winning the cricket world cup with the likes of Darren Gough and Nasser Hussein repeatedly like back in the day sounds delightful.



DARRAN JONES

THE CLUB
80% - ISSUE 163

I love arcade games. I also love score attacks games that continually push you to better yourself. *The Club* is all this and when you finally run through a level with a full combo, the feeling is like nothing else.

OUTRUN ONLINE ARCADE
80% - ISSUE 180

It's a little stripped down compared to *Coast 2 Coast*, but when it comes to pure arcade racing nothing else comes close. *OutRun 2* got forgotten due to *Burnout 3*, but no one's talking about Criterion's game now.

SEGA MEGA DRIVE COLLECTION
79% - ISSUE 177

There's no way I'm taking all my Japanese imports to an island, so this is the next best thing. Impressive emulation and a good mix of games means this compilation will last me for ages (which is Sega backwards).

Darran stubbornly refused to make his selections add up to 250%, because he "wants to play these games". He's donated his spare 11% to Rebecca.



REBECCA RICHARDS

FINAL FANTASY VII
93% - ISSUE 27

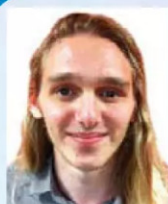
Easiest pick ever. So much to do: Gold Saucer stuff; breeding a gold chocobo; getting a date with Barrett; getting picked by the Don with my soft, shimmery dress and blonde wig, fighting Weapons, seeing Aeris' ghost...

FEZ
95% - ISSUE 243

I'm a sucker for retro graphics and music, so this is perfect. Also, I'm forgetful as all hell, so by the time I get to the end, I'll definitely have forgotten how I did the puzzles the first time.

LEGO INDIANA JONES
73% - ISSUE 167

Thanks for the 11%, Daz! In honour of your name, I choose this. Also for the amount of characters to unlock, special bricks to find, all that stuff. Longevity, man. I've got a strategy.



JOSH WEST

FINAL FANTASY VIII
92% - ISSUE 47

Final Fantasy VIII is one of those wonderful games that you can enjoy forever in isolation. Square's opus has it all; incredible characters, compelling story, awesome music and a kick-ass battle system.

TIMESPLITTERS 2
94% - ISSUE 95

Thankfully, this desert island comes equipped with four pads and four mysterious apparitions to play multiplayer with. That means that *TimeSplitters 2* is so on.

SILENT HILL: HOMECOMING
64% - ISSUE 174

I'm only bringing this along because I had space, but why not take a bloody survival horror game along for the ride? If I'll never get to experience *Silent Hills*, this will have to do.



DOM PEPPIATT

SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: LUCIFER'S CALL
80% - ISSUE 131

Of all the PS2 RPGs I could have chosen, *Lucifer's Call* tops it because of two things: first, it's the height of the SMT series, and second, it has *Devil May Cry's* Dante in it.

ROCKSMITH
78% - ISSUE 223

If I'm going to be stuck for years, I need to master something. I was considering fighting games, but learning all the Iron Maiden DLC will be less arthritis-inducing in the long run.

JAK II: RENEGADE
92% - ISSUE 108

I cut my teeth on Crash Bandicoot as a kid, then learnt how to deal with stupidly hard games as a teen with *Jak*. *Jak II* was like *GTA* for kids, with an insane difficulty curve.



STEVE HOLMES

DARK SOULS
90% - ISSUE 211

Although it wouldn't do much for my mood, considering its *fairly* bleak tone, From Software's brutal RPG was my first choice. In fact, I could probably just take *Dark Souls* and give away the rest of my points – something tells me I could play it forever...

DRAGON'S DOGMA
48% - ISSUE 218

I've never played it, but Luke assures me that it's great. Somebody way back down the line gave it a pretty low score, making it a bargain as far as I'm concerned. Action-RPGs are a good shout; there's always more to do.

MINECRAFT
93% - ISSUE 240

This one's a no-brainer, really. Mojang's magnum opus may play out like a cross between *Time Team* and *Grand Designs*, but for some reason it works. It's a game where even the very end isn't actually the end.

AMY
19% - ISSUE 215

Well, I miscounted, and therefore thoroughly shafted myself with this one. I've never played it and I probably never will, but why have three games when you can have four? What's wrong with excess?



NICK THORPE

THE KING OF FIGHTERS XIII
76% - ISSUE 213

I'm going to need a game that lasts forever on this island, and competitive games work well in that regard. *The King Of Fighters XIII* is a bargain at 76%, featuring a wide range of characters to learn and a team mechanic that means two matches are rarely the same.

SONIC GENERATIONS
70% - ISSUE 212

My lingering fondness for the early Nineties means I have to bring a *Sonic* game, and this is the one to go for. The return to 2D platforming stages was a much-needed step and the 3D stages finally worked properly.

CATHERINE
61% - ISSUE 215

Having a challenging single-player game to struggle against is a good plan, and playing *Catherine* on hard mode will keep my masochistic side satisfied for ages. Also, all the drama is well worth enjoying again.

DYNASTY WARRIORS GUNDAM 2
43% - ISSUE 176

Being trapped on a desert island, at some point I'm going to lament life's unfairness and get very drunk on the rum that is *most definitely* available, so I'm going to need a game that doesn't need much brainpower.



DAVE SCARBOROUGH

PORTAL 2
95% - ISSUE 205

Just like a withering pensioner filling in a crossword on the number 15 bus to Letchworth, nothing passes the time spent in life's little limbos better than an old fashioned brainteaser. Well, actually, there's nothing old fashioned about Valve's masterful puzzle box: this is tough, funny and damned gratifying stuff.

GRAND THEFT AUTO V
97% - ISSUE 236

Los Santos is so huge that the only way I can possibly imagine myself experiencing every last detail of its pitch perfect parody of Los Angeles was if I was trapped on a desert island for a year with no way to escape.

ASSASSIN'S CREED
58% - ISSUE 161

While it's one of the weaker entries in the series, it's also one of the purest. Altaïr was a calculating guy, slowly manipulating the environment and those within it in constructing the perfect kill.



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Driveclub

Is the first exclusive PS4 racer worth the wait?



RACING IS A game of two halves. Wait. We've got our sporting metaphors mixed up. Either way, *Driveclub*

– Evolution Studios' much-delayed racer – is definitely a game of two halves.

The single-player modes, of which the *GRID*-esque 'Tour' is a central pillar, are unlikely to get your motor redlining. Across various series of races, time trials and drift challenges, you'll earn experience points ('Fame') for all your on-track endeavours, from overtaking to driving a clean sector. These points help you level up in much the same way as the *Shift* franchise, while completing various on-track challenges awards you with gold stars that unlock the various levels. We're sure it all sounds pretty familiar to you and that's because it is.

Racing against the AI is a frustrating endeavour too thanks to their willingness to ignore your existence during race starts. You'll find yourself in the lead

soon enough but, even then, their elastic tendencies mean their bumper-nudging tactics are never far away. Still, at least the fact there aren't many tracks means you'll get used to where your computerised rivals enjoy using you to slow down.

With all this panel-bashing, you'd think that *Driveclub* would have a pretty substantial damage model but, in the name of keeping the game "fun", there's no mechanical disadvantage to be had from cannoning into another car or inanimate object with the velocity of a runaway scud missile. Normally, in a game that tries to look as realistic as possible, such an omission would be inadmissible, however, we have to agree with Evolution. No damage in *Driveclub* is actually refreshing.

Across the five real-world locations, the environments aren't as stunning as we hoped. In fact, they don't feel particularly next-gen in their execution even if the sheer size of each landscape is

impressive. However, small details such as falling leaves and wind-caught litter helps to inject a little next-gen pizzazz, along with a few 'oohs' and 'ahhs'.

Graphically, the car models are similarly underwhelming, at least from the outside (though glowing brake discs are super cool). Stepping inside the cockpit of each vehicle is another visual story, though – *Driveclub* has perhaps the best lighting effects since *Killzone: Shadow Fall*. Watching the light refract off your windscreen is a mesmerising experience, while the level of detail is beautifully immersive. The transition from day to night is pure art, with driving in the darkness a seamless yet excellently claustrophobic experience.

Driveclub is also an outstandingly eargasmic aural experience too. Every exhaust note and kerb rumble brings the game to life, aided by some of the best arcade handling seen in a videogame in some time. In fact, Evolution's dynamic

DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Sony

DEVELOPER

Evolution Studios

PSN PRICE

£49.99

PLAYERS

1-12

INSTALL SIZE

17 GB

AGE RATING

3+

TWITTER

@Driveclub

Trophies 32

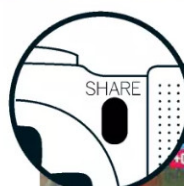


"THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION IS SKILFULLY WOVEN INTO THE OVERALL GAMEPLAY"





△○×□ No officer, I wasn't speeding. Well, okay, maybe a little bit.



PLAY CHALLENGE



SHARE THESE FEATS, IF YOU CAN...



DRIFT

▲ **HEAD TO FRASER** Valley in Canada and try to beat our drift score of 6,909 in a Ferrari F458.



TIME TRIAL

■ **TAKE A MERCEDES-BENZ AMG A 45** around the Indian Bandipur Reverse circuit and beat our time of 1m23.387s.

Beaten our trials? Let us know @PlayMag_UK!

work is so good it's hard to tell if this falls on the arcade spectrum or not. Each car has a superb sense of weight and momentum under cornering and braking, with different engine layouts resulting in realistically differentiated dynamics. It all sounds pretty simulation-heavy, yet anyone can pick up *Driveclub* and have fun just, well, driving.

In reality, Evolution had to make the driving accessible yet rewarding as this is what will encourage you to dip your toes into the multiplayer, where *Driveclub* really comes alive as a concept. The social integration is skilfully woven into the overall gameplay – justifying, to a degree, the delay that ensured *Driveclub* missed launch day last year – constantly creating competition.

Within your club (or as a lone wolf), you are forever in competition with every other player, with your times and scores constantly ranked and displayed in the menu screens. There is always a new challenge to try out, always a new way of being the best, either as an individual or as a team. And don't think the

competition is purely time-based; within each event there are numerous 'Faceoffs' that challenge you to best a drifting score or better another player's average speed. Therefore, winning in *Driveclub* isn't all about being first past the post, creating the first racing game where everyone in the team can feel like they're truly pulling their weight in some department.

Some will no doubt argue this is just a next-gen development of *Need For Speed's* Autolog concept. But it's more pervasive, more addictive. Sure, there are elements that are far from perfect, but *Driveclub* is a title that deserves a least a little sip of the winner's champagne.

Josh Barnett

VERDICT

Not as polished as we hoped, but the constant need to be the best keeps us sliding into the driver's seat for one more go. It sounds better than it looks, but it's an accessible experience.

77%

Race Ahead

Use these ten tips and tricks to put you on top of the Driveclub podium

CLUB TOGETHER

The first rule of *Driveclub* is 'Don't talk about *Driveclub*'. Dodgy movie reference aside, it's a damn good idea to join a club as some of the game's content only becomes available once you've teamed together with your mates, or a bunch of online randoms. Your club's level will give you access to certain cars and liveries otherwise unavailable in solo play so, if you truly want to complete *Driveclub* you're going to have to buddy up and do it as a team.



MODULATE BRAKES

At the moment, there is a dearth of PS4-compatible steering wheels. This isn't a problem, though, as the handling is so damn fun with the DualShock 4. To eke out those extra tenths of a second you need to be a demon on the brakes, something made easier by the latest pad's much-improved triggers. Some cars will require you to hit the stoppers hard before tapering off, while others favour a more gradual approach. Either way, you'll need a deft trigger finger.



NO SCRATCHES

Especially relevant online (no one likes a douchebag), try and avoid contact with other racers, and barriers, when competing. Panel-bashing with the AI or the scenery knocks Fame off your total for each event, while racing a clean sector or lap is rewarded with extra points. If you smash into stuff with enough force you'll incur a penalty, limiting your car's speed for a few seconds. This could be the difference between winning and losing, so play nice.



BEAT EVERY FACE-OFF

In time trials, circuit races and point-to-point events, you will be faced with numerous tasks, where you have to best another player's average speed, drift score, or racing line total. Initially, it is all too easy to just ignore these extra challenges and solely smash your opposition on the track but, make sure you try to beat each one. Successfully completing the Faceoffs earns you more Fame, meaning that the next shiny supercar will be available sooner than you think.



DRIVER'S SEAT

Driveclub may not be the most beautiful game from a third-person perspective but, head inside the cockpit and you will find the graphics and the gameplay grow exponentially. Interior details are excellent, with the syncing of the gearshift animation to your actual button press surprisingly swift. What's more, when faced with a windscreen, *Driveclub*'s outstanding lighting truly comes to life. It's an astounding, immersive experience.



BLANK CANVAS

Without any mechanical tuning, liveries are the only form of personalisation available to you in *Driveclub*. You'll gradually unlock different designs as you progress through the game turning your garage into a space for artistic expression. Liveries don't bring any performance benefits, but you will need to create one to earn a Bronze Trophy, plus a distinctive colour scheme could loom large in your opponents' mirrors should you become an infamous online racer.



DRIFT KING

Unlike some racing games, Evolution didn't alter *Driveclub*'s handling for the drift challenges. You'll have to figure out your preferred method for going sideways but, bizarrely, hitting the barriers mid-drift or spinning out doesn't negate the points scored in that sector. We found the best way of scoring pinball-esque totals was to barrel into each corner with monumental speed before tapping the handbrake as we turned in. Hold onto the slide for as long as possible.

DRIVER PROFILE
Driver Accolades

VEHICLES
EVENTS
GAMEPLAY
LOCATIONS
MANUFACTURERS
GAME MODES

3 Hot Hatch Racer
4 Events left to Level 4
Complete any event driving a Hot Hatch Class Vehicle to contribute to this Driver Accolade.
Reward for next level: 12,500

2 Sports Racer
5 Events left to Level 3
Complete any event driving a Sports Class Vehicle to contribute to this Driver Accolade.
Reward for next level: 12,500

2 Performance Racer
19 Events left to Level 3
Complete any event driving a Performance Class Vehicle to contribute to this Driver Accolade.
Reward for next level: 17,500

1 Super Racer
14 Events left to Level 2
Complete any event driving a Super Class Vehicle to contribute to this Driver Accolade.
Reward for next level: 20,000

DIVERSIFY

If you're looking for 100 per cent completion, you are going to have to max out your driver accolades for every manufacturer, location and event in *Driveclub*. This is a significant grind (name a recent racing game that doesn't involve at least a little bit) but is something that can be speeded up if you are a master at each type of event. Levelling up in each event is linked to your success so make sure you are always winning to minimise your grind time.



CHALLENGE ME

Driveclub encourages you to accept challenges and challenge other players (there are even a few Trophies linked to this element). Heading the table at the end of the challenge will bring you a significant amount of Fame but, most importantly, by using the ghost of the fastest player, you can master a range of tracks. While the challenge's ability to show you where other racers are faster sounds demoralising, it's a really useful and addictive tool for honing your own driving skill.



LOOK AROUND

You *could* use the mirrors but, like all racing games, they're not great. Instead, use your right analogue stick to look around and gauge where your competitors are. It's not a revolutionary feature but, especially when racing in cockpit view, it will help you avoid contact with the AI or online racers. It may be difficult but getting the big picture during race starts is definitely a key skill when the AI seems to discard the 'I', making panel-bashing a regular occurrence.



The Evil Within

A very classical haunting



DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Bethesda Softworks

DEVELOPER

Tango Gameworks

PSN PRICE

£49.99

PLAYERS

1

INSTALL SIZE

37 GB

AGE RATING

18+

TWITTER

@TheEvilWithin

Trophies 42



TO A LARGE extent, *The Evil Within* feels and plays like a game from a bygone era, a time when the term 'survival horror' meant the provision of something grotesque and deplorable rather than truly scary. Given the involvement of *Resident Evil* creator Shinji Mikami, such a nostalgia-soaked romp should come as little surprise.

Here you play as Sebastian Castellanos, a detective struggling to retain his sanity in the face of both the nightmarish events happening around him and a traumatic personal life that continues to haunt him. As far as hackneyed protagonists go, Sebastian is there towards the top of the pile; a conflicted persona of paranoia, confusion and bad dialogue. It's these clichéd elements, however, that go a long way to instilling the game with palpable charm and B-movie appeal.

There's little here that we've not seen before, but the skill and care with which it's presented makes for a 15-hour crawl that is never anything less than riveting. In a fashion typical for the genre, ammo is sparse, your health is a constant worry

and stealth is your best friend. These problems are forcibly brought to the front of your mind thanks to powerful enemies that range from typical zombies to female-shaped spider hybrid things and chainsaw-wielding sadists.

Given just how over-the-top everything is, only the most sheltered of adults are going to feel legitimate fear as a result of these creatures' involvement, but their presence does create genuine tension and panic. Knowing that death is just around the corner, and that your limited resources

are unlikely going to see you through a prolonged encounter, forces you to constantly plan ahead and tread carefully. These actions, in and of themselves, effectively communicate suspense and impending doom.

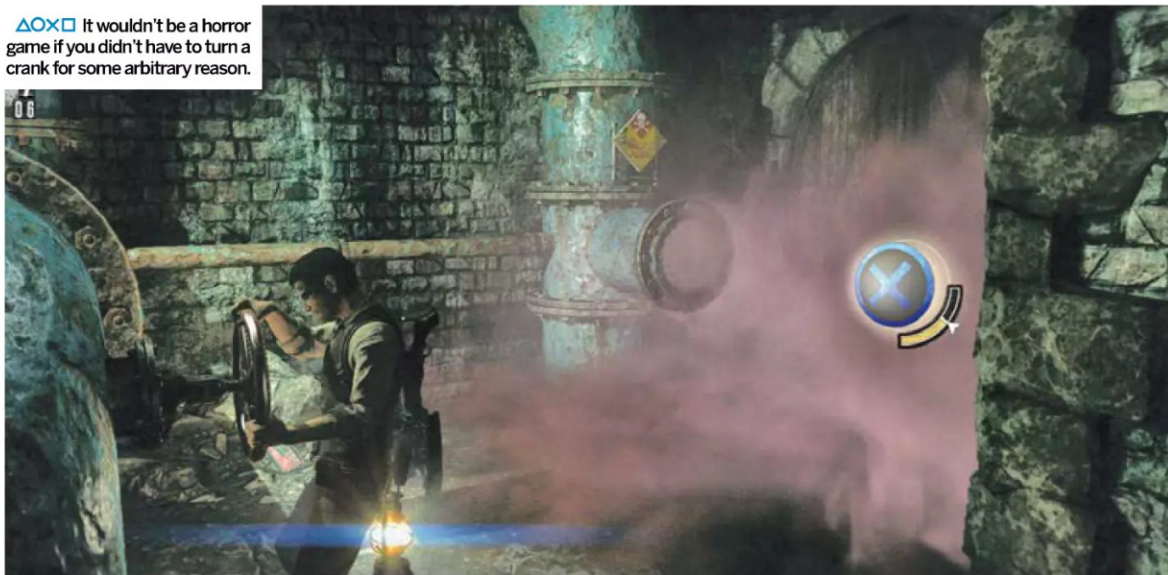
More horrifying than the enemies themselves is the environment, a beautifully macabre, hellish vision that utilises every trick imaginable to distort any sense of calm or peace you might harbour – abandon hope all ye who enter here. Areas lit by your meagre lantern



△○× This guy isn't going to win any beauty contests, but what he lacks in attractiveness he makes for in his dedication to kill.



△○×□ It wouldn't be a horror game if you didn't have to turn a crank for some arbitrary reason.



cast ghoulish shadows, and muffled yells from untold sources are heard through walls. Camera graining and flickers make it seem as though the world is literally being torn apart and the use of classical music creates an unsettling juxtaposition of tones. All of these components are exaggerated by a camera positioned so snugly against Sebastian's shoulder that

resources limited, but your vision is too, strengthening and empowering those feelings of uncertainty and dread.

Undoubtedly, though, the camera can make things irritating, particularly during boss battles that are often utterly unforgiving. Such encounters are characterised by death after death until you've worked out exactly how you

"ONLY THOSE WITH PATIENCE ARE GOING TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE TOUGHEST FIGHTS"

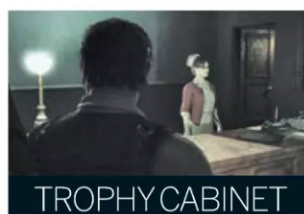
it's frequently difficult to see exactly what dangers surround you. Mikami used the same information-limiting trick in *Resident Evil 4*, but the tight corridors and confined spaces within which the bulk of *The Evil Within* takes place means it's even more effective here.

Some may be put off by the sense of claustrophobia the camera angle creates, artificially making things more difficult by preventing you from seeing what Sebastian blatantly can, but the result justifies the means. Not only are your

should approach them, with a carefully planned procedure taking precedence over intuitiveness or quick reactions. That difficulty is the very thing that makes them satisfying once won, but only those with patience are going to make it through the toughest fights. In line with the rest of the offerings, the pacing and frequency of these tests firmly position the experience as one of old-fashioned design... a compliment rather than a rebuke.

And that's exactly how you should think of *The Evil Within*: as a continuation

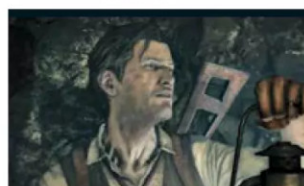
△○×□ It's a real mixed bag visually, looking stunning one minute and dreadful the next. Cutscenes tend to be the worst offenders...



TROPHY CABINET

MASTER OF UNLOCKING

Small white statues contain keys for unlocking safes full of valuable resources. Make sure to look in every room and desk to find them all.



THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

Planning on finishing the game in under five hours? Don't bother until you've completed it once and acquired the powerful weapons awarded for a New Game+ playthrough.

of a wonderful framework that has all but disappeared from the modern gaming landscape. Remove the characters and the setting and you've got an experience that feels every bit like a PS2-era *Resident Evil*, albeit one with modern luxuries such as sharp HD visuals and rather generous checkpointing.

Here's a game that realises virtually everything it sets out to achieve, proving once again that a focused design will always produce better results than one aimed at maximum accessibility. *The Evil Within* is not for everyone, but those with a taste for this kind of punishment will appreciate enormously what's been accomplished here.

John Robertson

VERDICT

This is undoubtedly a divisive game, with players likely to adore and hate it in equal measure.

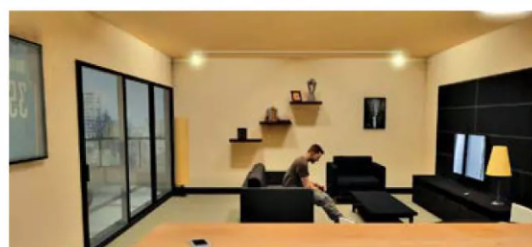
However, that's *The Evil Within's* strength: it's pitched perfectly at fans of the horror genre.

84%





"THIS IS WEIGHTY AND UNINHIBITED BASKETBALL WORKING EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD"



△×□ This is your apartment, where your journey to NBA stardom begins. This is just before your hapless agent barges in uninvited.



NBA 2K15

The Basketball Diaries



ALSO ON PS3

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
2K Sports

DEVELOPER
Visual Concepts

PSN PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1-10

INSTALL SIZE
52 GB

AGE RATING
3+

TWITTER
@NBA2K

Trophies 51



AT SOME POINT over the last few years, 2K decided that what basketball games were lacking more than anything was a gripping, inspirational narrative. Where this idea came from is anyone's guess, but lo and behold it has been run with, resulting today in the most dramatic NBA game ever made. That's not an accolade achieved lightly, and it's a strange one. It's fair to say that drama does walk hand in hand with American sports coverage most of the time – there's more hyperbole, more pizzazz than in the UK – but 2K has decided to pull this drama out of the arena and into *NBA 2K15*'s other game modes.

MyCareer – a mode in which you create a player and live out his career – is great, but does suffer under the weight of 2K's decision to make a basketball game play out like *Mass Effect*, with pointless dialogue choices and odd cutscenes in your player's apartment feeling superfluous and forced. It's different, which is good, but it's jarring and a little hard to watch at times. Still, the dramatisation of a struggling basketball

player's trials and tribulations (on and off the court, man) only represents one facet of 2K's game, and purely serves as embellishment for a wonderful recreation of the sport, both in terms of licensing-driven authenticity that *FIFA* would be proud of and in regards to some of the strongest sports gameplay that we've seen in a while.

This is weighty and uninhibited basketball working exactly as it should. Dribbling is as tight as ever, with change of pace and direction providing more feedback than ever before, and with the right stick (defined in *NBA 2K15* as the ProStick, whatever the hell that means) acting as a freeform skill/shooting control, there are a huge amount of options available to you to get free of your man and open up a shot. Calling for a screen (where another chap on your team blocks an opposing player, allowing you to zip round him with ease) is only a button press away as well, providing offensive options that encourage you to play with creativity and intelligence.

Similarly, shooting feels more responsive and a little more accessible than last year, and a meter underneath



△OX□ Just for another little drop of authenticity, 2K has included court-side interviews with certain players, using their real voices.



the shooter that provides colour-coded feedback determined by how long you hang in the air before releasing the ball is a welcome addition. Defending is typically difficult, but so rewarding when you get it right; in MyCareer mode, when you're only playing as one person, your defensive performance is constantly under the microscope, as losing your man and allowing him to score or even jumping too early when trying to block him is fiercely penalised. Once again, this is something that truly encourages you to analyse and adapt your technique, making the overall experience that much more rewarding as a result.

All these gameplay features and more are generally excellent, and so it's a shame that in order to get into the game and start honing your ability you need a compass to find your way around. There is a videogame under there somewhere, and an awesome one at that, but everything is hidden behind an ugly wall of modes and menus that are irritating to navigate – just put an option in the main menu saying 'Play a game of Basketball' (or something more thrifty)

and be done with it. A confusing UI leads to a sense of frustration every time you boot the game up, and 2K could do with being reminded that nine times out of ten, simple is best.

However, a dodgy interface doesn't completely mar the overall experience and a few online issues aside, we became hooked almost immediately. There's no denying how much there is to do here, with a multitude of modes and custom options neatly padding out the core game. It's deep, technical and well made, and even though the visuals don't seem as impressive as they did last year during the PS4's infancy, this is still very much one of the better sports games out there.

Steve Holmes

VERDICT

It's accomplished, accurate and fun, but there are a few underlying problems. Still, purely as a basketball game, there isn't anything out there that's better than this.

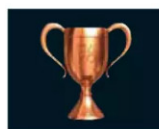
84%



PLAY CHALLENGE

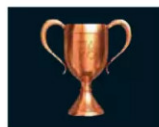


SHARE THESE FEATS, IF YOU CAN...



BUZZER BEATER

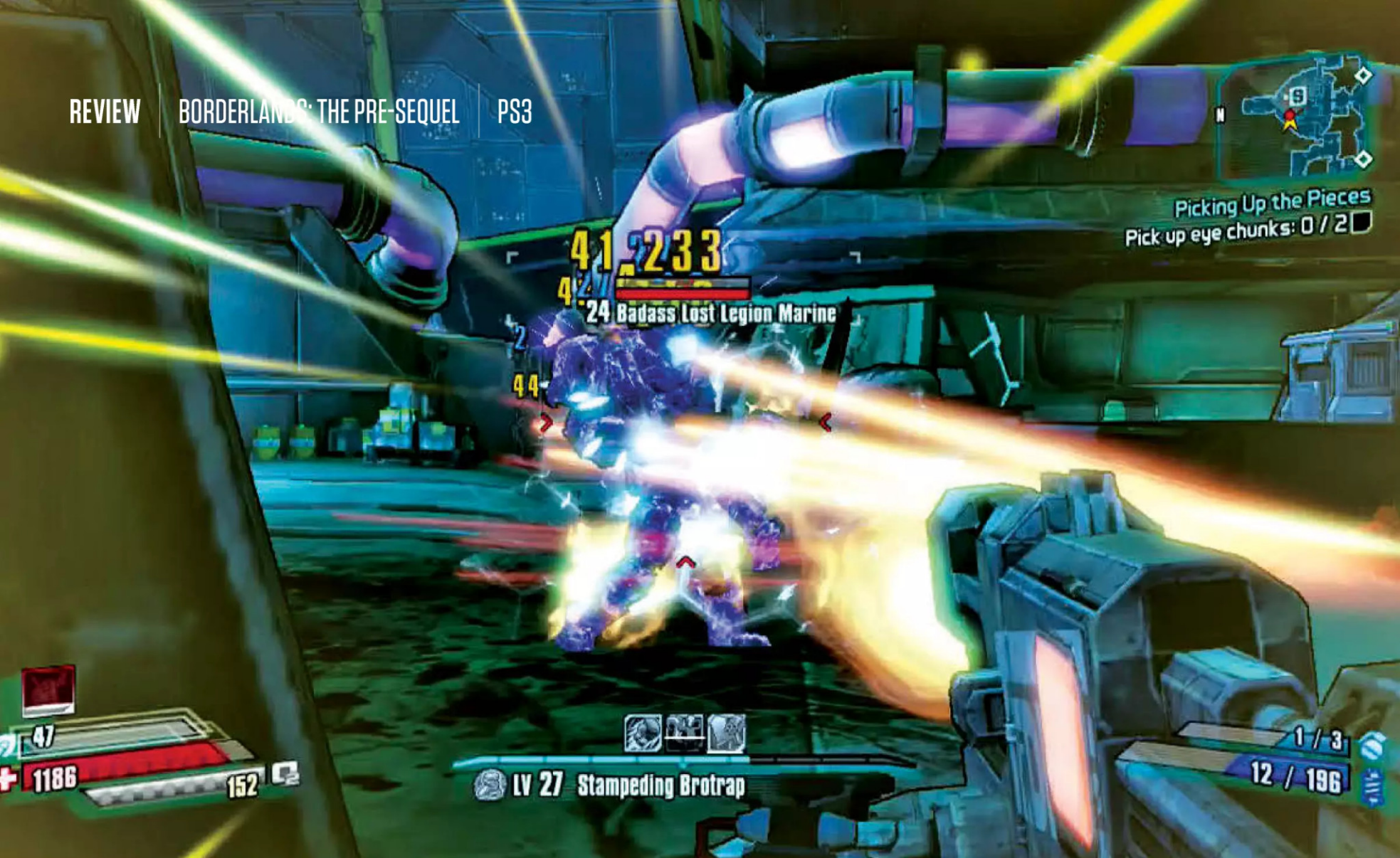
▲ **HIT A LAST-second shot** from behind the half-court line. If you manage it, send us a video to prove it...



ON TRIAL

◼ **YOU'LL BE ASKED** to try-out for a team at the beginning of your MyPlayer career. Get an A rank to secure your spot.

Beaten our trials? Let us know @PlayMag_UK!



Borderlands: The Pre-Sequel

Dark side of the moon



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
2K Games

DEVELOPER
2K Australia

PSN PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1-4

INSTALL SIZE
5.5 GB

AGE RATING
18

TWITTER
@borderlands

Trophies 51



THERE'S A REASON

this isn't called *Borderlands 3*. Let's just get that straight out of the way. Too much of what we like about *Borderlands: The Pre-Sequel* comes from the fact that we've seen and enjoyed it in previous games already. The old characters are great, the art style is still uniquely engaging, the gunplay is exhilarating and the loot is plentiful. Hooray! But, hopping from one chipper mechanic's fetch quest to another, the main quest line doesn't have anything like the same richness and diversity that *Borderlands 2* had.

It feels a little unfair to put it into such stark comparison, but we're just a bit sad and disappointed. Perhaps it's the Australian censorship/classification issue, perhaps it's just a case of cultural humour not translating particularly well, but *The Pre-Sequel* just feels dated, and nowhere near as edgy or

funny as previous instalments. Where *Borderlands 2* had a *Minecraft* secret, for example, *The Pre-Sequel* has Mario. Jokes about Don Bradman's cricket, and English colonialism don't really work as a touchstone for most gamers. There's nothing intrinsically bad about it feeling a little more mellow, but it's not exactly in the same tone as the previous games.

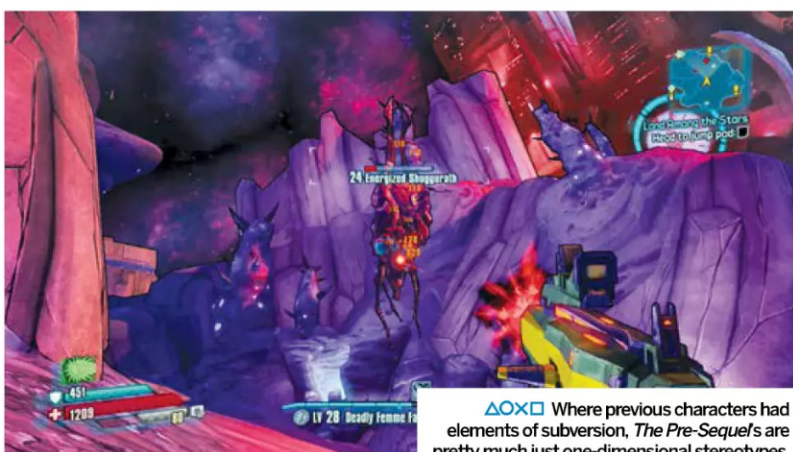
But let's get onto the good stuff. The shooting is, as ever, excellent, and the new freezy elemental weapons are

coming at you. The skill trees are a lot of fun and have great range – and can be as complex or as simple as you want to play. Claptrap's skill tree in particular suited us down to the ground, with its random abilities – like bouncing around in a giant rubber ducky (we suggest slamming it down on enemies with every adorable wub-wubbed bounce) – giving an air of unpredictability and excitement to combat. Which is good, because the combat bits last for a long damn time.

“JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU’RE FINISHED WITH A FIGHT, ANOTHER GROUP COMES RUNNING AT YOU”

great fun to play with, even if they're a little OP. Seriously, we got a level nine shotgun and used it for a good ten levels. But with no Slag weaponry to be seen, these freeze/shatter guns are vital to making it through the waves of enemies

Every fight feels like Moxxi's Underdome; just when you think you're finished and you can take a little shield-recharging breather, another group of shrieking nasties will come running at you. Once you get used to the new



△×□ Where previous characters had elements of subversion, *The Pre-Sequel's* are pretty much just one-dimensional stereotypes.



In place of elusive Eridium, *The Pre-Sequel* has Moonstones, a considerably more easy-to-find substance. Dropped frequently by enemies, 40 of these bad boys will open one of the special chests you might find about the place, and will usually get you some pretty good weapons. Usually not hidden but on your route, you need to be particularly careful when opening these big chests, as you might find yourself dropping Moonstones on them without meaning to. That said, it's not hard to claw them back, so you can afford to go for it every now and then. While they're needed for some end-game stuff, most of the bosses will spit out a whole heap of 'em.

△×□ Basically, if you get why Claptrap had to have a stair-climbing subroutine added to his abilities, this is probably going to be something you'll enjoy. If not, you might find yourself a little lost.



pace of these fights, you learn not to go into menus and have a look at any loot you picked up but to stay alert until everything is definitely dead, but it does feel like it's artificially stretching out the kind-of-thin content. That said, the most enjoyable thing about *The Pre-Sequel* is by far the gunplay, so quit being so cynical and just enjoy the crazy colourful numbers spurting out of the screen as you murder everything in sight (and if that's not happening, you're not playing *Borderlands* right).

Jumping around with the moon's crazy gravity takes some getting used to, though to compensate for having to pick up oxygen canisters (unless you're Claptrap, who doesn't need to breathe), you've now got a double jump of sorts and a sweet new AOE slam move that you can execute by hitting Circle in mid-air to drop onto bad guys. We're surprised the neighbours didn't complain about the constant shouts of 'Death from above, bitches!', because we yelled that a lot. It's really not made that much of when it's being explained to you in-game, but it's vital to get this down.

Combat isn't just a case of Slag your enemies then crit-hit them to death any more; you need to get a handle on these slam attacks, combine them with the Cryo weapons and preferably some kind of singularity grenade, and go for the headshot if you see an oxygen mask. It does change up the nature of combat, meaning that those who are used to hanging back and picking people off one by one will very much need to get more into the fray this time around. We're usually way more into careful sniping (combined with evil giggling), but it's a refreshing change of pace to get more involved, especially when using these

new elements in joyfully lethal harmony with each other all clicks into place.

But it's at this point that we have a confession to make. Yes, guns are awesome, and yes, shooting beasties and bad guys in their stupid dumb faces with exploding weapons and freezy grenades is a good time, but the smart half of our brain was also looking forward to the character development and story expansion. Handsome Jack is an insane, smart, egocentric megalomaniac – an excellent game villain – and we were pretty damn keen to see how he got that way. We're not going to ruin anything, before you start cursing our names and scratching your eyes out, but these elements of *The Pre-Sequel* are, like a lot of the game, just a little disappointing.

Basically, just don't go into *The Pre-Sequel* with hopes for another *Borderlands 2*. Again, it's not bad, just lacking in depth. Take it as its own thing, bounce around the moon, stomp your enemies, blow shit up, and you'll have a great time with your friends. But because this is an in-joke-ridden game designed for existing *Borderlands* fans, those who know and love the series are the most likely to pick this up, and they (we) are the ones most likely to be disappointed with what's on offer here.

Rebecca Richards

VERDICT

With such a rich history behind it, *The Pre-Sequel* had a lot of good stuff to use, but also a hell of a big pair of shoes to fill. Our time on the Moon was fun, but not nearly as much as Pandora.

69%



PES 2015

Giant killer



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Konami

DEVELOPER
PES Productions

PSN PRICE
£39.99

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE RATING
4+

TWITTER
@officialpes

Trophies 41



INVARIABLY, WHEN YOU hear fans of the *PES* series tell you what they love so much about those games, their stories will be tied

together by a common thread: variety. They might tell you about a specific goal that they remember, but the reason it's able to stick out in their mind is precisely because each goal before and after seemed unique, allowing that goal they've singled out to feel like it's special. They might regale you with a tale about how they scraped a draw in a scrappy, hard-fought match, but again, that someone's created a story based on the character of a match relies on the fact that each game feels distinct enough to facilitate that. When *PES* is at its best then, it's all about fostering the sense that every moment is unique – just as in the sport on which it's based – and we're delighted to report that *PES 2015* does just that.

As a football game that encourages a thoughtful approach to build-up play, *PES 2015* can be intensely rewarding when you pull off an attacking move successfully. There's a real sense that

every passage of play is crafted entirely by you, that the game will only fall into predictable patterns of approach play if you decide to force it to. The tools are there for you to attack the opposition in a variety of different ways, using a variety of different techniques and that keeps it feeling constantly fresh and exciting.

That sense that you're always in control of how you approach a game is somehow maintained despite the fact that each team has a certain character

as to how it plays, just as in the real world. You might be playing as a team that prioritises possession and high pressing, like Bayern Munich, for example, and will of course have players with a natural tendency to make certain kinds of runs, but that doesn't mean that you can't radically impact how a game plays out. If you choose, you can accelerate the pace of a game and favour a direct style of play, getting the ball out wide and using the control that *PES 2015's* dribbling

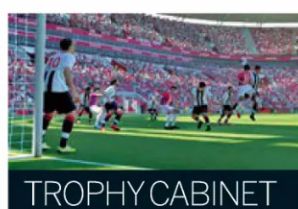




△×□ PES 2015's player models are quite incredible (though admittedly, more time has clearly been spent on the big names).



△×□ Master League veterans will recognise names like Gellazca and Mirandinho when they start a new campaign.



TROPHY CABINET



CHAMPION MANAGER
Take it slowly – you don't want to bankrupt yourself or unbalance your squad by going for big stars too early.



LEAGUE'S BEST ELEVEN
Scoring goals is the easiest way to get good ratings, so you're probably better off creating a striker.

gives you to drive into the box with the likes of Robben and Ribery, with a couple of tricks and feints thrown in for good measure. Or, you could slow the game down, control the midfield and carefully draw the opposition out before kicking into gear and cutting them apart with a clinical passing move – and yes, *PES 2015*'s AI facilitates this, notably making an effort to give you viable options, more often than not.

Despite being almost uniformly excellent in how it plays, though, *PES 2015* is not perfect. The game doesn't quite get things right when it comes to physical confrontations, with collisions and tackles too often descending into farce as players periodically trip and stumble on and over each other, as if partaking in a spontaneous slapstick routine. Those moments can be frustrating and do punctuate the sense

of realism somewhat, but, thankfully, only represent a minor blemish.

Speaking of realism, some compensation for the lack of licensing is provided to football fans courtesy of the way that star players have been animated to be instantly recognisable. Sure, that a Ronaldo or Ozil will sprint, weave and dribble in the style of their real world counterpart doesn't really impact on the act of playing the game, but it's a lovely touch nonetheless.

If there's one area where *PES* has consistently lagged behind its competitor, it's in terms of modes and presentation (external to what you see on the pitch). *PES 2015* takes some encouraging steps to address that. Sure, online seasons and Ultimate Team rip-off MyClub have both been poached straight from *FIFA*, but we'd be lying if we said we're not pleased to see their

inclusion. In some aspects, too, there are improvements to *PES*' interface, but the likes of Master League still remains a case study in clunky design.

When you've got a core game of football that's as good as what's offered by *PES 2015*, though, those criticisms matter little. *PES 2015* is an exceptional football game that makes a legitimate claim to be regarded as the best released this year.

Paul Walker-Emig

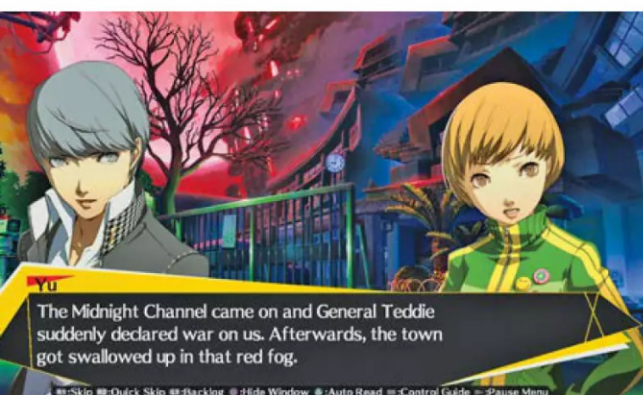
VERDICT

The Germany of football games – intelligent, exciting, controlled, technically impressive and a world champion with a bright future. Every game feels fresh and exciting.

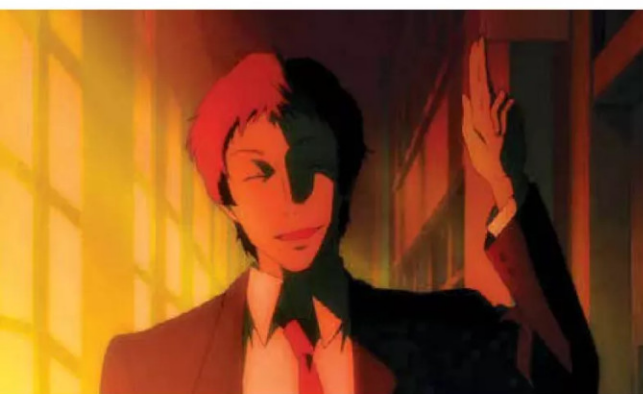
88%



△○×□ Those playing it for the story will at least have pretty visuals.



△○×□ Two stories recap the events of the third and fourth games.



△○×□ It looks great on PS3, but it's not a patch on PS4 *Guilty Gear*.



Persona 4 Arena Ultimax

"I'm you; I'm your shadow!"



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Sega

DEVELOPER
Arc System Works

PRICE
\$59.99

PLAYERS
1-2

INSTALL SIZE
12 GB

AGE RATING
T

TWITTER
@atlusUSA

Trophies 61
1 3 5 52



EVERYTHING WE LOVED

about the vanilla *Persona 4 Arena* is back (and better) in *Ultimax* – the hi-res, beautifully animated 2D sprites, the bizarre screen-filling attacks of the fighters, and the two-tiered action all continue to work in unison to create a game that might have Atlus' *Persona* series all over it, but runs like the best Arc System Works games underneath.

If you've ever picked up *BlazBlue* or *Guilty Gear*, then you'll feel right at home in *Ultimax* – each face button corresponds to a light or heavy attack; two for Personas, two for main fighters. By fusing the status effects, 'One More' mechanics, All-Out Assaults and SP requirements of *Persona*'s RPG experience, Arc System has managed to craft a fighting game that's a lot more intricately balanced than some of the other 2D competition (it makes vanilla *Skullgirls* look naked by comparison).

The *Ultimax* version makes a few subtle changes to how *Arena* worked – firstly, the auto combo system (mash Square and you'll do a chain that cancels into a Super by itself) has been augmented – now you can literally just hold Square until a bar fills up and unleash Super moves. This makes the casual experience even better – *Persona* fans in it for the story (which is just *awful*, by the way, it's an insult to the various RPGs' stellar character-driven plots) can waltz their way through without a problem.

The real work has been done for the competitive players, though; the tweaks and alterations made to the gameplay rebalance the game and mix up the tier list. That's right, you can't just wail on everyone as Yu. *Persona*-heavy characters receive more 'Cards' under their health-bar – meaning *Persona* users can get more mileage out of their avatars when active, but have to wait longer if enough counter hits land to break them. In *Arena*, all characters had five by default, and you'd be amazed how much a subtle update like this affects balance.

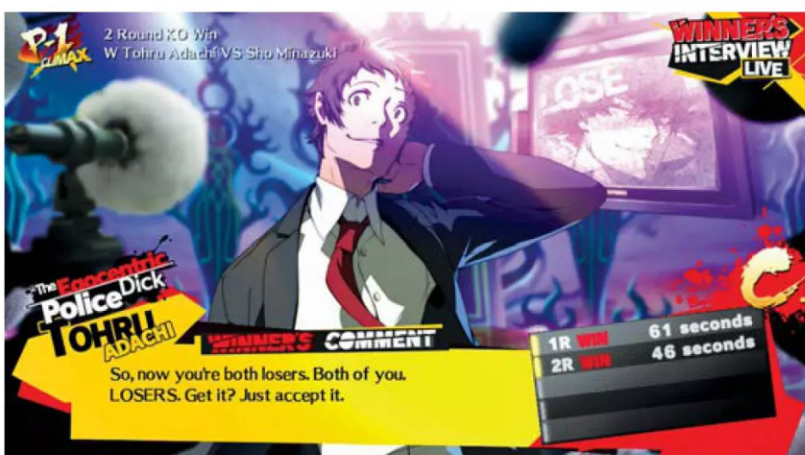
Most characters now come with a 'Shadow' version of themselves, too; aside from new animations and voice-work – we recommend winning as Shadow Kanji, just to see his pose – Shadow fighters have the option to use their most powerful attacks whenever, and can even unlock the ability to cancel supers into other supers. This can be round reversing if pulled off adeptly, plus it's pure replay gold. This basically means your favourite fighter will now have two modes – and a character with myriad



△×□ Sho is new to *Ultimax*, and an Arc System Works character to the core – he's quick, highly damaging and has a ridiculous dodge.



△×□ Yukiko is back – and she's as good a zoner as she ever was, gaining more ranged attacks and a flashier, better auto.



powerful Supers will handle completely differently as a Shadow character than in their real version. To account for this, overall combo damage has been reduced, making even one-sided fights feel more tidal and exciting.

This upgrade alone warrants moving to *Ultimax* over *Arena*, but it's the new

money. Two tedious story modes pad out what's already a good offering, and getting to grips with the new systems and tweaked returning characters will give veterans something new to sink their teeth into.

Persona 4 Arena Ultimax is a polished, more refined release than its

“THE COMBAT REMAINS SOME OF THE BEST AND MOST INTRICATE ARC SYSTEM WORKS HAS COMPOSED TO DATE”

characters that are the icing on the cake: Junpei's unique baseball-inspired level-up system is nuts, and took us a fair few rounds to get used to. Ken and his dog Koromaru are two characters in one – controlled by two face buttons each – and what this means is that you can craftily shove the dog into opponent's combos, breaking them up and trolling on a whim. Sho Minazuki has two different icons in character select – one with a Persona and one without. Again, these versions handle differently, with the latter gaining a dodge function to offset his lack of an avatar.

With an RPG-inspired challenge mode (think Abyss Mode from *BlazBlue*) and unique combo challenges for every character, even players in *Ultimax* for the solo experience will have good value for

predecessor. The UI is sharper, the sound design improved and combat remains some of the best and most intricate Arc System Works has composed to date. It's just a shame it's come so late in the PS3's life, and without a PS4 or Vita port looking likely, it at least gives us a reason to keep a spare kettle plug handy to pop into our PS3s at a moment's notice.

Dom Peppiatt

VERDICT

A better, more worthwhile upgraded edition than any *Street Fighter IV* release.

Collecting the casts of *Persona 3* and *4*, it's a near-flawless victory for the 2D fighter.

92%



Middle-earth: Shadow Of Mordor

Turns out one *can* simply walk in...



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Warner Bros.

DEVELOPER
Monolith Productions

PSN PRICE
£54.99

PLAYERS
1

INSTALL SIZE
27 GB

AGE RATING
18

TWITTER
@middleearthgames

Trophies 52



ALSO ON PS3

PRAISING A GAME that's as startlingly derivative as *Shadow Of Mordor* is something we'd normally be loathe to do, but that's what's about to happen. How has a title that's so reliant on pinching systems from other games managed to win us over? Because it does have one idea of its own, one idea that elevates it into something far greater than it would otherwise be – an idea that provides a structure on which everything else hangs, that creates intrigue and direction that would otherwise be lacking. We are talking about the Nemesis system.

The Uruks that roam the land of Mordor in which you'll be playing have a hierarchy – from captains to warlords, each orc is vying for power, trying to move their way up the ranks, or maintain their position. The fun comes when you interject yourself into those power struggles and manipulate them for your own benefit. For example, it's possible to invade a duel taking place between two Uruks and take out the stronger one in order to move the weaker orc up the ranks. Brilliantly, mini-stories will

naturally emerge from the system as rivalries develop with orcs that survive their encounters with you, coming back with scars or metal plates on their head, seeking revenge and perhaps even thwarting one of your carefully laid plans, to give but one example.

The Nemesis system really comes into its own when you gain the ability to bend orcs to your will. We personally like

While there are a not-insignificant number of campaign missions and side-quests for you to tackle, we'd be hard pushed to pick out any that are particularly exciting, smart or otherwise noteworthy. The world itself, too, is a little dull, meaning that travelling through it can occasionally feel like a chore (though, admittedly, its relatively small size makes that less frustrating than it might be).

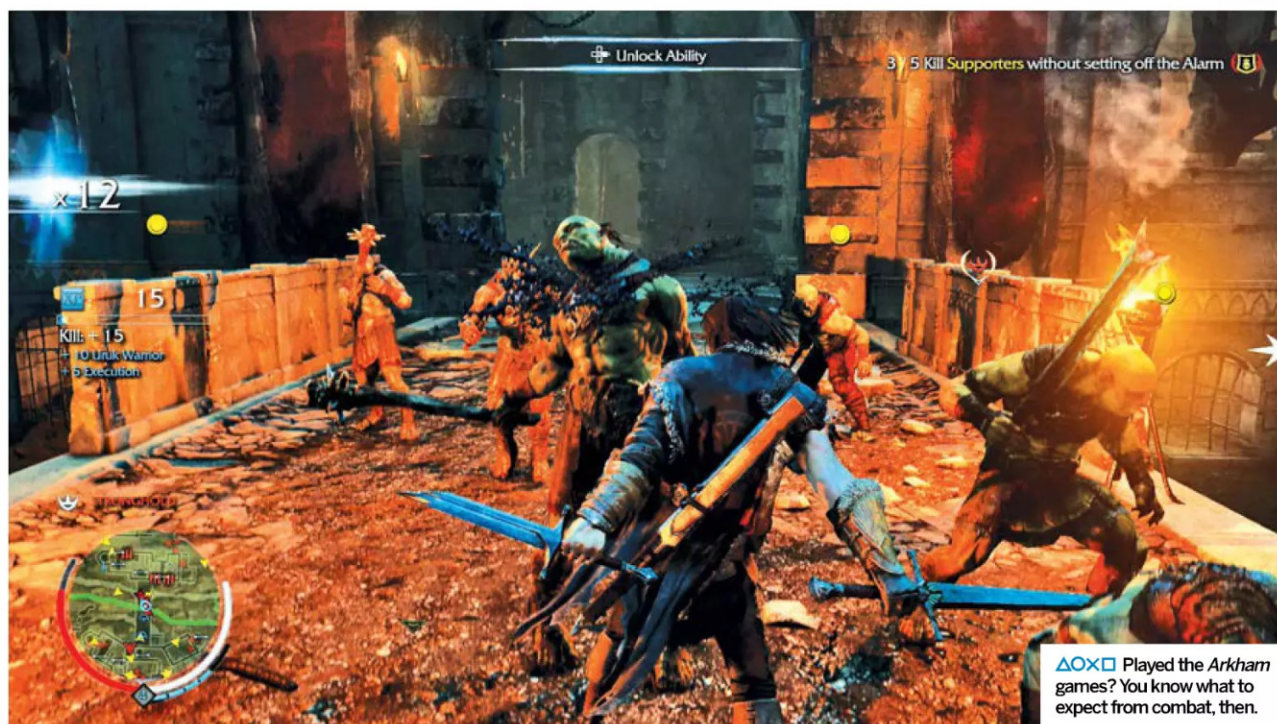
“MINUS THE NEMESIS SYSTEM, SHADOW OF MORDOR WOULD BE SOMEWHAT UNINSPIRING”

ordering a couple of orcs to become a warlord's bodyguard and then turning them against him when we're ready to take the warlord down, ensuring one of our boys steps into his place. There's something immensely satisfying about that act of pulling the strings behind the scenes as you make devious calculations about how and when you use the Uruk hierarchy to help you take a target down.

It's a good job this is so much fun to play with, because in other aspects, *Shadow Of Mordor* is to be found lacking.

When it comes to combat and traversal, the game is solid, if unspectacular, with its mechanics lifted from the *Batman: Arkham* series and *Assassin's Creed* respectively. Just as in *Batman*, there are attack, counter, stun and dodge buttons that you'll employ in order to build a hit-streak, allowing you to periodically perform special moves that you gain throughout the course of the game. The system doesn't have the same sense of flow as the series it's nicked from, but it remains enjoyable





enough. Similarly, while *Shadow Of Mordor's* Assassin's Creed-like stealth and climbing mechanics are completely unoriginal, they're perfectly functional and facilitate the ability to sneak around a camp taking out orcs in a way that's undeniably satisfying.

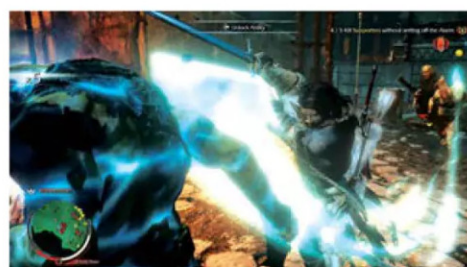
Minus the Nemesis system, then, *Shadow Of Mordor* would be uninspiring, to say the least. It would be a game that's taken ideas that work in other series and re-presented them, in the case of the game's combat particularly, as a facsimile that's recognisable, but lacks the soul of the original. It would be a game with a solid base, but without anything special to really hook you in, grab your attention or drive you through the experience.

Mercifully, though, the Nemesis system does change everything. Once you start to get to grips with it, all *Shadow Of Mordor's* weaknesses suddenly start to matter very little. The perverse Machiavellian pleasure that arises from manipulating your enemies provides you with the incentive to set your own goals and build grand plans, gives you a reason to poke at the game's possibilities and play around in its world. In short, the Nemesis system makes *Shadow Of Mordor* a far better game than its shameless cribbing of elements from other titles might lead you to believe.

Paul Walker-Emig



PS3 DIFFERENCES



SHADOW OF ITSELF

Beware of the PS3 version of *Middle-earth: Shadow Of Mordor*, not because it doesn't look as pretty or because you don't get bits of dialogue spouted at you through the DualShock 4's speaker, but because of the Nemesis system. On PS3 the scope and complexity of the Nemesis system has been

scaled down significantly. Given that it is by far the best aspect of the game, the element that makes it worth playing, that's a big problem. We're not going to tell you not to buy the game on PS3, just that you need to be aware that you could be missing out on the very thing that makes the game great.

VERDICT

In many respects, *Shadow Of Mordor* is a rip-off of other titles, but its one original idea – the Nemesis system – ensures that doesn't matter. Manipulation and subterfuge are always fun.

80%

Skylanders: Trap Team

Gotta snatch 'em all



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Activision

DEVELOPER
Toys For Bob

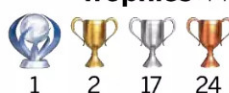
PRICE
£59.99

PLAYERS
1-2

AGE RATING
7+

TWITTER
@SkylandersGame

Trophies 44



CONSIDERING THAT LATECOMERS to the 'Toys X Games' party include giants such as

Disney and Nintendo, you really have to hand it to Activision for managing to not only kickstart the entire movement off the back of a single character (Spyro, incredibly) but also for making over a billion dollars in the process. This is a market that has been grown from effectively nothing – the *Spyro* series was basically dead before this necromantic fundraiser – and while it would be easy for the team to keep churning out new toys and accessories that serve no actual purpose except to the oddly persuasive screeching voice from the back seat of a car, they just keep innovating. This year's gimmick (and it is just that) might not be quite as smart as those of previous years, but we get the idea that it deals in a kind of magic that those somewhat younger than us might just buy into quite a lot more than we do.

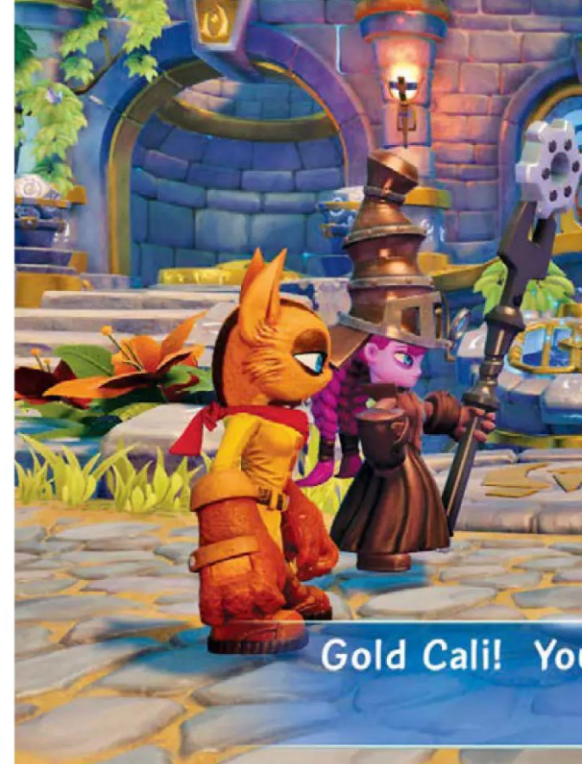
Send your old Portals to the attic, then, because this year's all-new Portal Of Power comes with some essential features that *Trap Team* is built around. For one, there's the hexagonal slot into

which Trap totems can be placed – the starter set comes with two and these are needed to capture boss enemies and make them playable. With no life bar, these guys instead stay out until their timer depletes and so relying upon them in anything resembling a challenging situation is not only possible but the best course of action. Make the bad guys do all the hard work, then just run around as your primary Skylander, avoiding damage until the trapped baddies recharge and are ready to come back out. It's an exploit that only the smartest younglings will reach on their own but an exploit nonetheless, and one that highlights the fact that while capturing creatures and using them in battle isn't the worst idea ever (is it, Nintendo?), it could be handled a lot better than this.

The Portal's speaker is way more effective than it has any right to be, however, and on those rare occasions when we hadn't used our captured boss for some time, hearing them plea for a chance to get back in the action from their confines in the Portal (the trap lights up as they speak and everything) was sometimes enough to twist our arms into calling them back in. It's a novelty and one clearly designed to encourage the purchases of countless extra traps in order to freely switch between bosses without having to return to the hub area, but it has that same novelty that placing a toy on a plastic plinth and watching it come to life in-game once did. It's still there, to a degree. But with others now copying the format, bringing toys to life is no longer the show-stopping magic trick it once was, so fair play to Activision for finding new ways to keep the magic alive.



It's not until the camera pulls right in close that you really appreciate the detail in the character models.



Gold Cali! You



Kaos is as shouty and amusing as ever. If you like him, be sure to check out *Invader Zim*





△×□ Unlockable hats are useful, but you'll need to fork out for new Skylanders to get most of them.



Gameplay-wise, there's not a great deal to report – *Skylanders* is still to *Diablo* what Duplo is to Lego and all of your old friends will still hold their levels and usefulness here. Well, to a degree. Where once any Skylander could open a gate of their element (with help, in the case of *Swap Force*), here only the new Trap Masters can unlock the doors that lead to new areas, challenges and hats. Older characters, now only useful in battle, feel somewhat redundant in

characters even manage to approach CG movie standards at points. The vocal work is every bit as impressive, with Patrick Warburton (Joe from *Family Guy*) on point with the easy funnies and Richard 'Invader Zim' Horvitz on typically superb maniacal form as Kaos.

There are two very different demographics for *Skylanders* and if you aren't already wearing a young human tugging at your sleeves until

“MAD KUDOS IF YOU MANAGE TO BEAT THE EMBARRASSINGLY TOUGH NIGHTMARE DIFFICULTY WITHOUT A LITTLE MORE MOULDED PLASTIC ASSISTANCE”

the story mode (especially if already maxed out), but you'll welcome their assistance in the extra modes – arena battles grow pretty challenging by the time you hit the later stages, as does the new tower defence-inspired Kaos mode. You technically don't need to fork out any more than the expense of the starter set to score the full set of Trophies, but mad kudos to you if you manage to beat Kaos mode or the embarrassingly tough Nightmare difficulty without a little more moulded plastic assistance.

It'd be remiss to fail to mention how good the game looks on PS4, especially given its emphasis on the idea of bringing toys to life – many figures actually look better on the screen than in real life, while non-toy supporting

you buy *Trap Team*, you're in the easier of the two. It's a thoroughly enjoyable game but one whose trapping gimmick will resonate far better with young players than older ones. But given the series' headstart in the 'Toys X Games' market, that's arguably enough for now. Next year, though, it might be a different matter...

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

Still a solid entry-level action-RPG, *Skylanders* is at a crossroads. This is the last year when mere iteration will cut it; we're gonna need to see something truly new soon.

79%

39
38

Fairy Fencer F

Well, at least it alliterates nicely



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
NIS America

DEVELOPER
Compile Heart

PSN PRICE
£39.99

PLAYERS
1

INSTALL SIZE
4.5 GB

AGE RATING
12

TWITTER
@NISAmerica

Trophies 29



WHEN IT COMES to Japanese role-playing games, no console has led the charge quite like the

PlayStation 3. Everything from *Ni No Kuni* and *Valkyria Chronicles* to *Dragon's Crown* and *Disgaea*... they're all unforgettable doses of quirky awesomeness. And yet, for every JRPG that fuses a compelling battle system with a captivating setting, there are those that feel like an uninspired knockoff. This could be down to a bland cast of characters or a severe lack of originality, but when a game's only noteworthy accomplishment is that it fits its genre perfectly, it's hard to view it with anything other than apathy. Unfortunately, this sums up *Fairy Fencer F* fairly well.

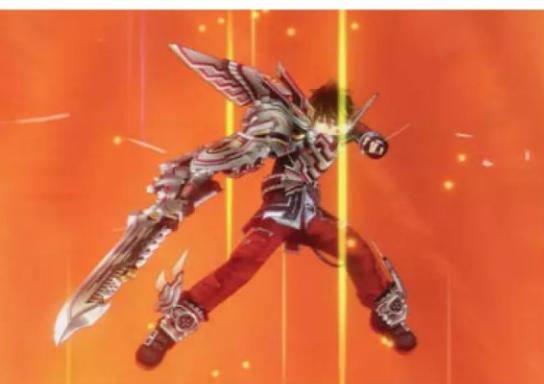
Coming from the same studio that brought us the *Hyperdimension Neptunia* series, it's no surprise that *Fairy Fencer F* has a lot in common with its anime-inspired stablemate. The game begins with a sword-in-the-stone moment that introduces the player to Fang – a layabout whose main interests include eating and sleeping. After pulling said sword from its resting place, Fang awakens a fairy named Eryn and gets wrapped up in a journey

to revive a dormant goddess. It's hard to feel much of anything towards Fang when he comes across as so fundamentally unlikeable, and much like the supporting party members that accompany him, Fang has all the depth of a teaspoon.

Tiara is the first companion you'll meet on your travels. She looks like a Hatsune Miku wannabe in a Lolita outfit, but despite having a bossy personality, she goes weak at the knees whenever Fang

insults her. The well-endowed Harley also suffers from an acute case of fan service. She acts as the party's main gunner when the battle music starts to play but you'll probably remember her more as the fairy researcher who's completely oblivious to her sexuality. There's one scene early on in the game where she strips completely naked after complaining about the humidity. You don't see anything too risqué, of course, but it's clear that





this game was made with a particular audience in mind.

The evidence also suggests that this game was built on a wafer-thin budget. Most of the world is portrayed with 2D backdrops and rigid animations, and even when you make your way into one of the generic dungeons to complete one of the simple side-quests, the 3D character models and enemies that greet you are inoffensive at best and placeholder at worst. And we're not lambasting this game just because it could probably run on a PlayStation 2. We just expect more polish and at least some ambition from a JRPG of this price.

Thankfully, the battle system is the one area where *Fairy Fencer F* saves some face. It's not going to redefine how you think about turn-based mechanics but at least it's not lacking in depth. You start off with a couple of characters and a limited selection of techniques, but as you find more fairies and level them up alongside your new party members, you'll unlock a growing repertoire of attacks that deal in bigger numbers and wider areas. The game also makes a big song and dance over the Fairize transformations. These

△×□ Dialogue is every bit as nonsensical as you might expect from a low-tier JRPG. Just mash Circle and get back to fighting.

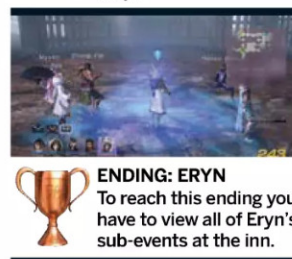
temporarily merge a character with their guardian fairy and unlock some of the game's more potent abilities.

Coming in at around 25 hours long for those who wish to endure it, *Fairy Fencer F* does at least get a little better once you break past the halfway point. The combat becomes less mindless, the story starts to pick up pace and you may even be marginally intrigued by some of the later characters. But when you're forced to play through a tiresome first half to get to an average second, there's just no way we can recommend this game unless you're a hardcore Compile Heart fan that's lapped up everything the studio has made so far. There are just too many other JRPGs that try far harder.

Matthew Edwards



SHUKESOO'S EVICTION
To unlock the 40th floor of Shukesoo's Tower you have to stab at least 40 swords into the world map.



VERDICT

You know those value brands that you often find in the big supermarkets?

Fairy Fencer F is the JRPG equivalent. With so much else around, it's not one we can recommend.

43%

REVIEW ROUND-UP

YOU MAY HAVE noticed, but there were an awful lot of amazing games on PS3. And now, we're in an unusual situation where we get to play all the best ones again with better graphics. *Tomb Raider*, *The Last Of Us*, *GTA*... all the cool kids are doing it, so why shouldn't one of the generation's most enjoyable sleeper hits have a go? **SLEEPING DOGS: DEFINITIVE EDITION [A]** has no right to be as much fun as it is given its lineage, but all former ties to the awful *True Crime* series have been severed – this is very much a standalone game and one that offers just as much in the way of bad behaviour and good times as the original. The PS3 version beat *GTA V* to the punch and that arguably had a fair amount to do with its success. But this 'ultimate edition' seems to suffer for the very same reason that its forerunner prospered – the need to release before Rockstar's behemoth has meant that this update hasn't had quite enough time in the oven. The game is still superb, no question. But on a console where

InFamous, *Killzone* and *The Order* are setting one hell of a visual precedent, a jump from looking 'good' to 'slightly better' is unlikely to win all that much attention. That said, if you never played *Sleeping Dogs* then we implore you to do so – however much *GTA* wins by in the presentation stakes, Rockstar's epic is likely to never have a hand-to-hand combat system as brutally satisfying as this.

Meanwhile, miles away from such triple-A conflict, Vita still exists and is still enjoying some great support even though the big

“ROCKSTAR'S EPIC IS LIKELY TO NEVER HAVE A HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT SYSTEM AS BRUTALLY SATISFYING AS THIS”

names seem to have washed their hands of it. **TINY TROOPERS: JOINT OPS [B]** is among the neat new games that continue to grace the system – a 21st Century take on 16-bit classic *Cannon Fodder*, it's a bite-size

slice of war that anyone can enjoy. There are no complex squad commands to memorise here, your entire platoon of soldiers all taking their lead from one set of inputs. You guide your squad around with one stick and shoot with the other, so quite why additional commands are mapped to the touch screen and face buttons when both thumbs are clearly going to be otherwise engaged is beyond us. That side of things can get a bit fiddly, but the core arcade twist on military combat is otherwise great fun.

Similarly, **SENTRAN KAGURA: SHINOBI VERSUS [C]** is also most enjoyable, although there's somehow more of a barrier to entry here than there is to a game that effectively trivialises war. When the game's dashboard icon is nothing more than a heaving pair of breasts, you're in no doubt

△×□ Tiny Troopers almost feels like a South Park twist on Call Of Duty and its modern warfare peers....



B



A

△×□ There's a marked improvement to the game's visuals, although facial animations tend to let the side down somewhat.





about what to expect, but then you likely knew that this franchise was a touch on the NSFW side when you bought into it. *Shinovi Versus* is a bizarre glimpse into Japanese culture and one that is basically indefensible over here – yes, clothing is damaged and even destroyed as you take hits, and that just makes it even harder to claim that the core combat (which is somewhere between *Dynasty Warriors* and *God Of War*) is actually quite good with a straight face. We're going to try anyway, because it genuinely is. But this is likely to be something that, good as combat may be, you can't admit to owning for fear of being branded a pervert (and rightly so – it's hardly in good taste).

Yet somehow, the **SOUTH PARK PINBALL [D]** add-on for *Zen Pinball 2* manages to avoid much of the controversy that the show so openly courts. This perhaps has something to do with the fact that one of the two new tables added centres largely around earlier, somewhat tamer series of the show while the other focuses on seemingly innocuous oddball Butters, but both still manage to be amusing all the same. It's



an odd duo of tables but one that works surprisingly well, with the busy nature (and quote overdose) of the 'main' *South Park* table offset by the somewhat more open and skill-based nature of the Butters board. Enduring such a barrage of show samples and classic lines feels like watching several series back-to-back, meaning this is a set of tables best played occasionally rather than rinsed for hours on end – at odds with the score attack nature of the game perhaps, but that just makes it all the more crucial that you make each credit count.

Meanwhile, on the flipside, you have **PIX THE CAT [E]**, a game where you're actively encouraged to keep playing until your numbers are higher than those your friends are boasting about. As a PlayStation Plus freebie, it's to be expected that there



△○×□ Prepare your ears for the quickfire quote onslaught that ensues when you hit the new *South Park* tables.



will be more players active than on most indies but sadly, the core mechanics don't lend themselves as well to this kind of competition as the likes of *Pac-Man CE* or *Resogun* – restrictive time limits and obvious paths make finding the perfect route far simpler than it should be and there simply doesn't appear to be the same kind of room for the skill ceiling to be raised as there is in other, better score attack games. We'd be happy to be proven wrong but right now, *Pix The Cat* is an entertaining and novel distraction, but not a great deal more. Roll on November's PS Plus games...

△○×□ Drop your combo and you might as well start your run again – your score goes down the toilet. Perfect runs are where it's at.



PUBLISHER SONY | DEVELOPER NANAON-SHA | FORMAT PLAYSTATION
 RELEASE DATE 30 AUGUST 2000 | PLAY SCORE 91% | METACRITIC SCORE N/A

The Making Of... **VIB-RIBBON**

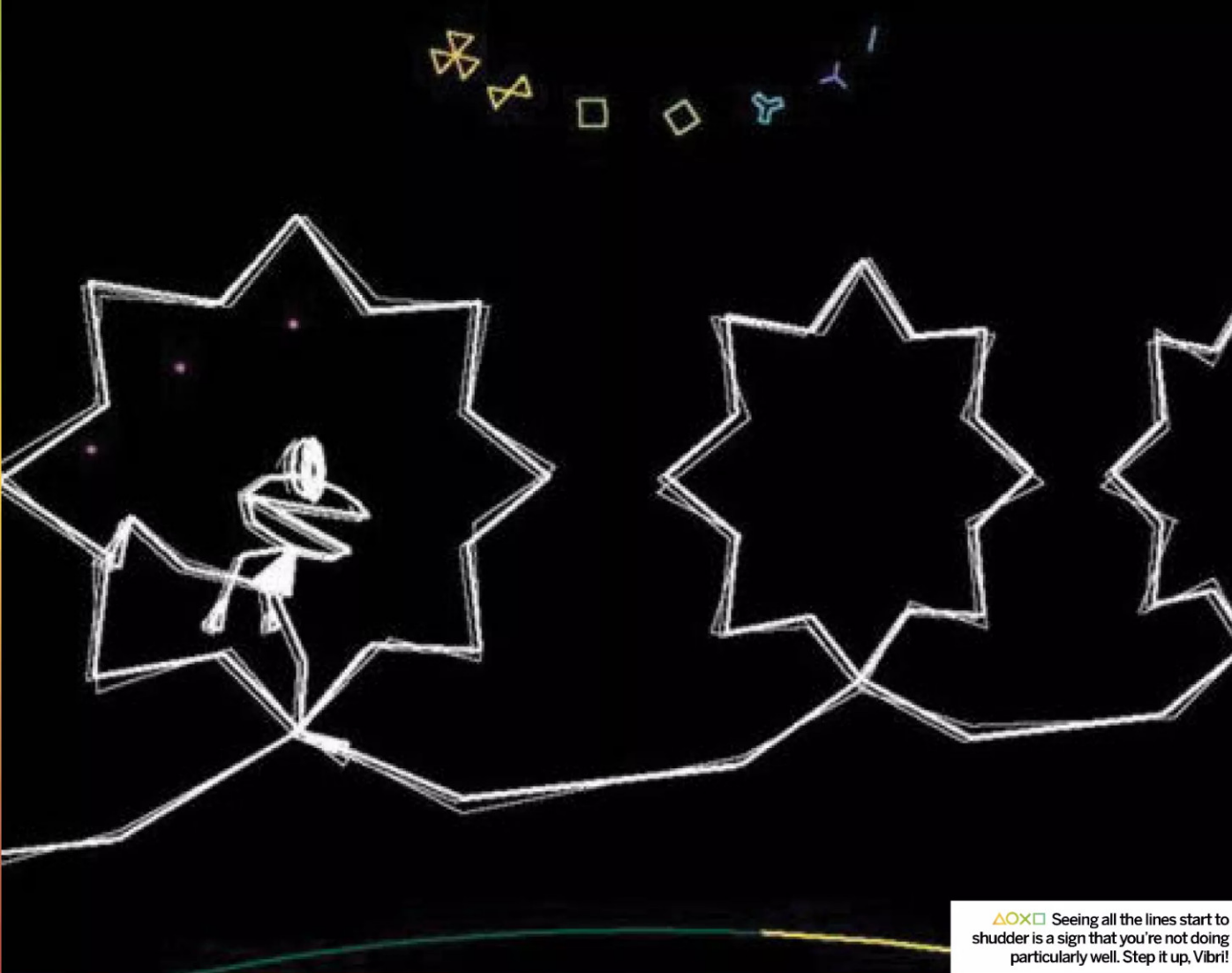
PaRappa might take all the credit for creating the rhythm action genre, but the studio behind the musical classic would go on to create a monochrome masterpiece. Luke Albigés revisits PSone gem Vib-Ribbon in celebration of the game's long-awaited arrival on PSN



Unlike the timeless pixels and sprites of the 16-bit era, it's a sad truth that the early 3D visuals employed by the majority of PSone games look pretty nasty today. Some of the earliest 3D games of the era are borderline unplayable – jaggy, confusing messes that we still remember being impressed by back in the day. But it's pretty difficult for the graphics of a game to age poorly if said game barely had any graphics in the first place, as is the case with this late PSone curiosity from the crazy genius that dreamed *PaRappa The Rapper* to life, Masaya Matsuura.

Arriving at a time when PS2 was just around the corner and graphics couldn't be more important to new games, *Vib-Ribbon* was a game that spat in the face of convention and laughed at the concept of commercial viability – a minimalist masterpiece that displays everything you need to interact with music and not a single line, shape or colour more. But it wasn't always planned to be quite so stripped back, as Matsuura explains. "Originally, the game was going to be completely different in style and gameplay," he says. "The only feature that didn't change was the capacity to play with your own CDs. We were thinking of creating more colorful/vivid worlds and characters in the beginning. But it started to bother me that the game sets off a specific world of music to the players. In fact, this made me stop working on the project entirely, after a year and a half into developing the game. In the end, I was able to see the world of music in a broader sense, and the game transformed into the current simple and non-detailed game – Vibri was born!"

In case you were wondering, Vibri is the adorable little wireframe rabbit who dances along the line in time with the music. Perform well and dance your way past multiple



△OX□ Seeing all the lines start to shudder is a sign that you're not doing particularly well. Step it up, Vibri!

obstacles without stumbling once and she evolves into a fabulous bunny princess, but mess up and it's devolution time – she morphs into a frog and then a worm with a TV for a head, at which point further mistakes will end your run in failure. “If we were to say that the world of digital data has dimension just like ours, Vibri would be a character who accidentally popped out from the digital world and into ours,” explains Matsuura, leaving us more confused than we were before he attempted to clarify. “All

“THERE IS NOTHING MORE BORING THAN SEEING AN OBJECT THE SAME WAY EVERY TIME”

digital data, whether it be an image, sound or program, is similar in that it takes the form of data in 0s and 1s. We human beings can decode data by using programs to show them as sound or images, but Vibri, on the other hand, decodes and recognizes the data in different ways. Therefore, particular changes or transformations in the music would, for example, translate into obstacles that Vibri has to negotiate while walking. This is the underlying concept of *Vib-Ribbon*.”

While it might be a fairly traditional rhythm-action game – press the right buttons in time with the music – one of the most interesting and innovative features of the game is the ability to use your own music by loading CDs into the drive when prompted. Some technical wizardry then transforms the beats and melodies into patterns of obstacles unique to that song, with camera angles and track speed also altered based on the song chosen. “Wouldn’t you agree that there is nothing more boring than seeing and sensing an object in the same way every

time you look at it?” Matsuura asks. “Most of the time, I think that new inventions are not simply new existences, but a result of a difference in perception. I came to realize this while creating music and I wanted to express it through a game.” We daren’t even think how many hours we lost just going through every CD we could get our hands on in the hunt for the hardest and most interesting obstacle courses and now, years later, we’ve got even more shiny discs to turn into musical journeys.

You weren’t forced to play to custom soundtracks, however, and Vibri’s adventure came loaded with a crazy selection of original

tunes – another decision that went against the climate of the time when licensed soundtracks were just starting to become the norm. But having familiar songs for the core experience didn’t gel with Matsuura’s vision for the game, where the on-disc songs were supposed to teach players the basics and encourage them to use their own music. “One of my objectives was to avoid having any particular music tied too strongly to this game, so I purposely tried not to have any in mind while working on this project,” he says. “One of the game designers was using a track from a Fatboy Slim album while working on the game, and since it fitted so well with the game, I think it had some effect on our choice.”

You’d be forgiven for not recognising the default tunes, then, but Matsuura claims that even getting original compositions to work in-game was a tough process. “We used a band called Laugh and Beats, together with a vocalist named Yoko Fujita,” he says. “It was truly arduous to produce their music, because what we were doing

BLUFFER’S GUIDE

Everything you need to know in five facts



1 *Vib-Ribbon* was developed by *Parappa* creator Masaya Matsuura and a small team.



2 While it features original songs, the real treat is creating stages by using your own music CDs.



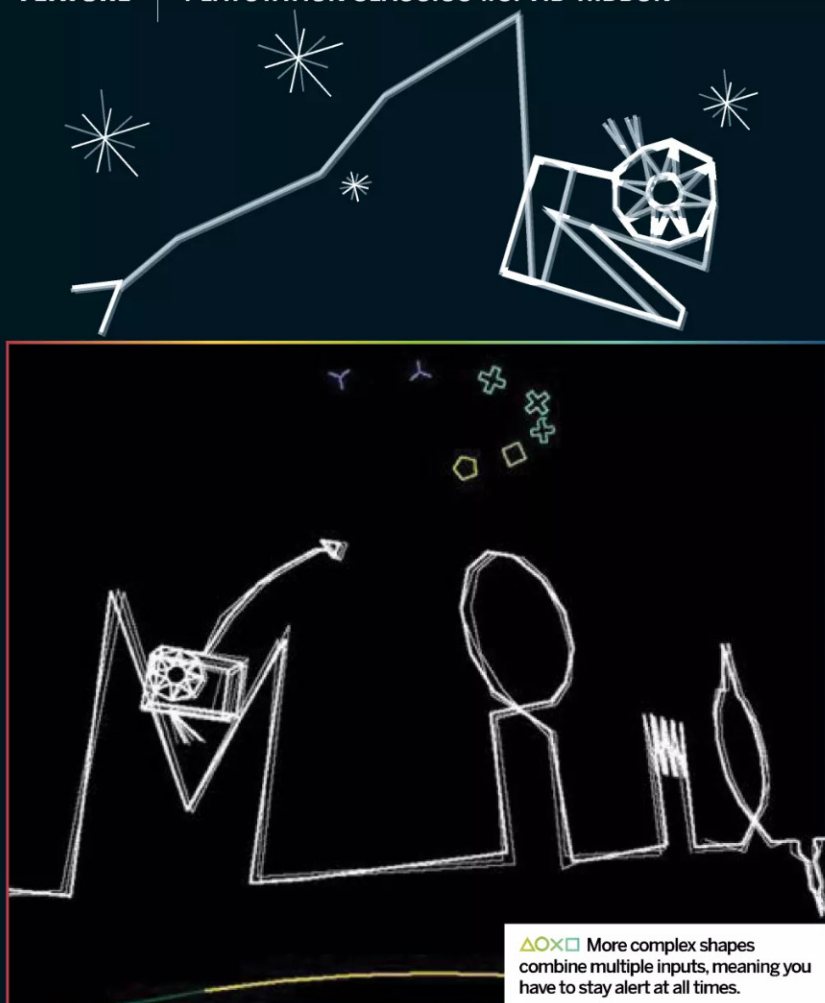
3 *Vib-Ribbon*’s release was poorly timed – it came out just a few months before the PS2.



4 There were two PS2 ‘sequels’ that only came out in Japan – *Mojib-Ribbon* and *Vib-Ripple*.



5 The game is now available on PS3 and Vita worldwide as a PSone Classic. Get involved!

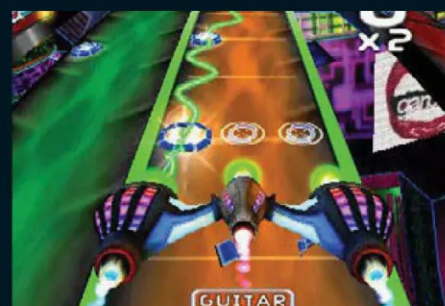


FURTHER READING



OLDER – PaRappa The Rapper

The classic musical tale of a rapping dog trying to win the affection of a sunflower by working at a flea market and hanging around in toilet queues.



NEWER – Amplitude

Some rhythm-action classics live on: Harmonix's PS2 masterpiece is still incredible, and a remake is coming to PS4 next year.

STANDOUT MOMENT



Musical Madness

The search for the world's hardest song continues...

The true joy of *Vib-Ribbon* is popping a new CD into the drive and seeing what happens. Due to the way the tech analyses each track, you can never be sure what the outcome will be. To make it interesting, the musical style doesn't dictate Vibri's path; a galloping metal

track could actually create a slow, simple stage, while an acoustic ballad could send you to high-speed finger-Twister hell. Beat-matching isn't perfect and obstacles are often mapped to off-beat high frequency bursts like cymbal hits or vocal lines, but the game is still brilliant fun.

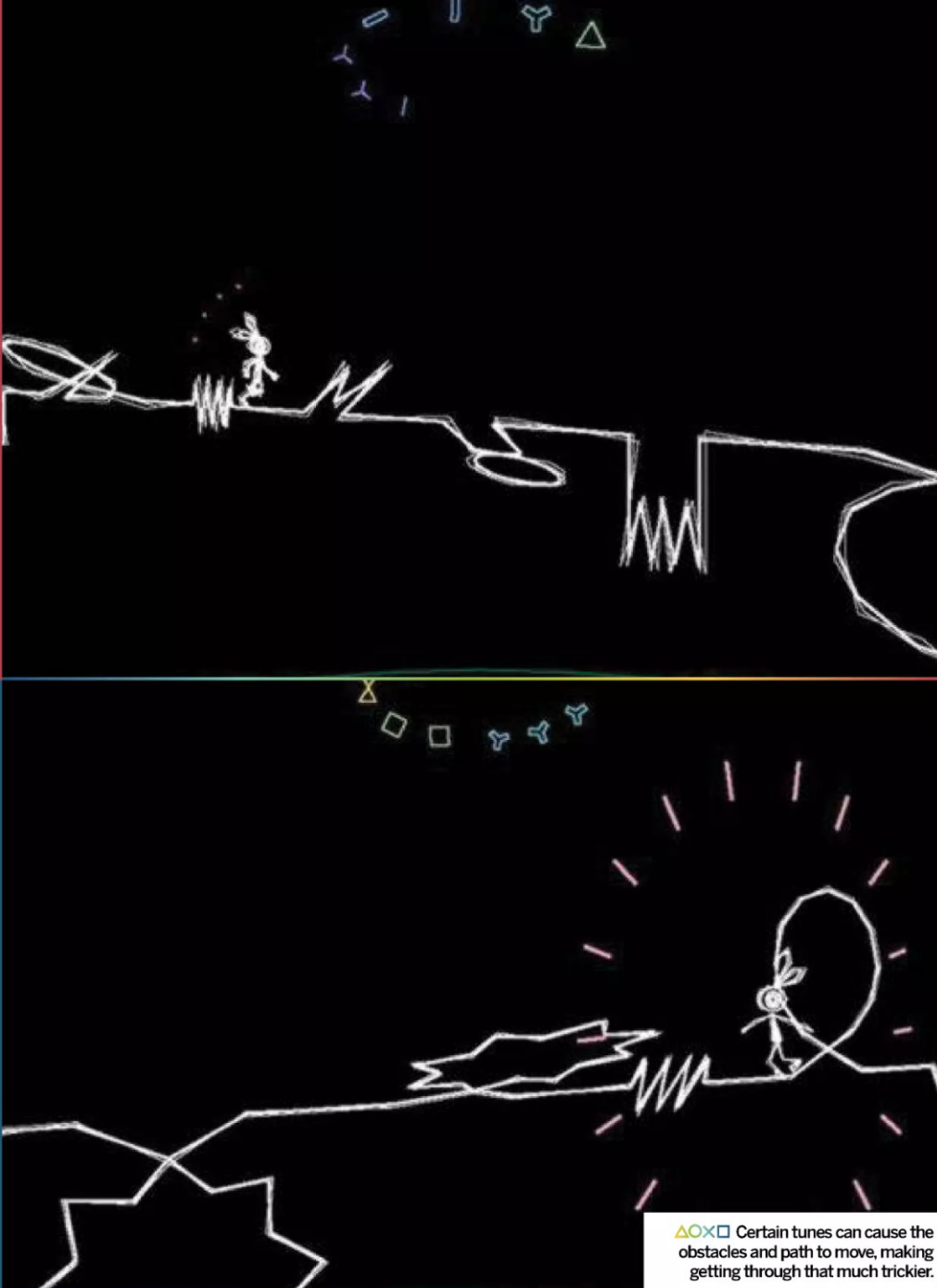
was creating music that fitted the world of *Vib-Ribbon*, without giving players the impression that a particular style of music is associated with the game, which is somewhat contradictory.

"For the first song and the more simple levels of the game, I asked them to write a song that emphasizes the synchronisation of the obstacles and the sound. And for the later levels, I asked them to add more variations to the sound of the music, to make the players want to play with their own CDs. I personally think that the music turned out to be a good reflection of their impression of Vibri. However, I had many detailed requests for the music and turned down their songs many times, so they might not want to work with me again!"

While getting the music just right was evidently something of a struggle for both the musicians and Matsuura himself, the team would face one challenge far greater – teaching a virtual rabbit to sing. "We used NTT to vocalise Vibri's voice through the Speech Synthesizer," Matsuura explains. "This system is really

great because it enables you to not only vocalize speech but also to sing songs. When a person speaks, the sound waves are transformed continuously. With NTT's system, each sound is picked up from the database of tiny waves, and connected in order to vocalise. Therefore, the part that analyzes a sentence and puts the sounds together, and the database itself are all very complicated in structure. This system is a standard format in terms of sound synthesizing technology, but *Vib-Ribbon* successfully integrated this system into the game." While far from integral to the gameplay, Vibri's cheerful singing after a great run just made it all the sweeter, and this tech would go on to be the foundation of Japan-only PS2 follow-up *Mojib-Ribbon* – a rap calligraphy game where all lyrics were speech synthesised, meaning it was even possible to write your own verses and play them as levels.

Looking at NanaOn-Sha's output over the years, it's pretty clear from the amount of rhythm-action games on the list that Matsuura's team is all about the music.



U RAPPIN' COOL

How a dog in a hat rapped a new genre to life

While there are a handful of earlier examples of music-based gaming, Matsuura's PlayStation debut with *PaRappa* is widely credited with establishing and popularising the rhythm-action genre. It wasn't just about following the beat to the letter, though – players were able to freestyle on any buttons used in the current sequence to have PaRappa spit rhymes around the patterns that must be followed. On your second play or later, doing this well enough elevates you to 'Cool' status, where the template of the level is removed and you're free to full-on freestyle your way to a high score. While this is naturally absent in *Vib-Ribbon*, the rap meter sort of lives on through Vibri's various stages of evolution.

"I believe that music and games go hand in hand," he confirms. "I guess I would consider myself more as a musician, even though people may see me as a game creator, especially through the media." However he may choose to define himself, Matsuura is an innovator above all else – originality is key in everything he and his studio do, leading to nearly two

idea of tapping in time with a beat is one that transcends age gaps and language barriers, and is something that people do even without a controller in their hands. With one, though, and with the right game in the drive, developers are able to turn a piece of music into a rewarding adventure. Matsuura has found his niche, his calling, if you will, and sees no reason to leave that

"I CONSIDER MYSELF A MUSICIAN, THOUGH PEOPLE MAY SEE ME AS A GAME CREATOR"

decade's worth of unique gaming experiences. "Nothing besides exciting inventions interests me, and I believe that this excitement can be shared among everyone," he states. "A lot of products nowadays only appeal to people locally, but a game is a medium that's relatively easily conveyed to people worldwide, and I hope it continues to be so."

The simplicity of the team's games is what fuels this universal appeal – the

comfort zone to try and compete with other specialised development studios. "American developers can create better basketball games than I can, just as European developers can create better football games," he admits. "But at the same time, I want those developers to understand that those sports games do not appeal as much to Japanese gamers, and to make increasing efforts to succeed in the Japanese market."





INTERVIEW

BENEATH THE BONNET

Andy Tudor, creative director on Project Cars, explains how the game is more than just a graphical showcase...

How important have you found the uprising of Twitch and streaming in the success and direction of Project Cars?

Part of the Driver Network is your highlight reel. These are some of the prettiest pictures you've taken, your proudest moments, cool gameplay laps, things like that you've done, there's a myriad of ways to share that stuff via technology. Go to our YouTube channel, we're collating the best gameplay clips from each week. Every screenshot and trailer you've seen of the game so far during development has been from the player's point of view. Our Driver Network is our way of continuing to show that support for the community. We've put in a special achievement to do a 24 hour real-time race of the Le Mans 24-hour and we encourage you to Twitch stream it especially with the number of charity events that happen throughout the year.

How is Driver Network different from AutoLog?

When we did *Shift 2* we kind of came up with the idea that it'd be nice if players could compete

with each other. If you got a notification saying 'I beat your time' and stuff like that. Then we looked at what Criterion were doing and they looked back at us and we realised 'God, we're doing the same thing aren't we?'. So we butted heads together and amalgamated both concepts into what eventually became Autolog.

They came out first with *Hot Pursuit* with Autolog version 1 and in *Shift 2* we did Autolog version 2. For all intents and purposes, the implementation of it in *Project Cars*... I wouldn't say version 3 – it's a separate thing – but it enhances upon the things that we've learned on those previous games. How we've found players to compete and share, and taken advantage of the new technology, new console hardware, and stuff like that. You can connect with your friends, compare your driver profiles with each other and see who's best, areas you might want to improve upon. Things you love playing but are terrible at. Like, you keep persevering at karting for example but you never win, so you compare my profile with yours and might love that and do really well.

We always say that *Project Cars* is the ultimate driver journey. What that means is that when you compare the stats and all the other things it tells a different story there of what you love doing, what you're good at.

That ties into the mentality of sandbox gameplay. Everything is unlocked to begin with, but that's the incentive to push players through all the game has to offer.

We're all racing fans. We've been making racing games for many years, and god forbid the next racing game comes out and I have to start in a really slow car, grind for cash to upgrade it to be fun and grind even further to the car I actually want. I'm done with that. Time is precious, we all have busy lives and I think gamers have become more mature as well. Growing up playing those games, they're looking for something a bit more fresh. By doing the simple thing of taking out the unnatural lock mechanics that stop you playing the things you want and taking all the currency out of the game, it puts the focus back onto the

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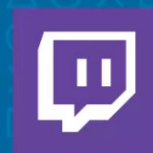
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driving. Second-to-second you're thinking 'I want to nail that gear change. I want to get closer to that guy in front of me. I want to get faster.' You're also thinking 'If I win this race I'll get more points in my championship, and if I win this championship I earn an accolade. If I earn this accolade then maybe other teams are going to start scouting me to go drive for them.' You start thinking like a driver. You start think in terms of your career. And that's something that has been happening in sports franchises like *Madden* and *FIFA* for years but hasn't really been done in a racing game before.

How do you plan to improve pad handling?

You saw me playing on gamepad. That's going to be my personal choice. We support a ton of wheels. With the gamepad we do a whole lot of things – most of which too geeky to talk about – but stuff like steering input and predictive input. The game also works on keyboard. The keyboard is very much an on/off situation as well, so people are asking how the triggers on the Wii U

version will work – well, we have to do it anyway for the keyboard so it'll work very well.

We've changed a lot of the input filtering. Dial a lot of the stuff individually, exposing that to the players as well. You can change between different gamepad settings currently. That might not make it into the final game but we're gauging which is the one most people are happy with. Personally, I find myself as competitive with the gamepad as others are with steering wheels. We've been running these community events that I've been competing in myself; I do well compared to other people that are in hardcore steering wheel mode.

With a game made through crowd-sourcing there's always a sense of ownership from the community. In that regard, how are you approaching post-launch support?

We've been making the game with the community since day one. It's our own IP and our own franchise and there might be people under the impression that it's a one-shot deal;

we release the game and then move onto something else or go back to licensed games. We plan on being around for a very long time. That plan is there because there's things we haven't announced that we will be doing. We want to support the community long after the game comes out – the Driver Network is part of that but there will be other things too.

Also, the game is a living, breathing thing. We have the community giving feedback throughout development. That same community tells you 'I want this in there' and when you put this feature in the game, you talk to them about how you can potentially expand it. And when you think about that concept that's exactly the same as how MMOs operate and that is very much a next-gen way of treating your game and players. The fire-and-forget mentality – release your game, drop some DLC, buy the season pass and then move on – it's something that can work, and games are still doing that, but as it's our own IP, our own franchise and we've made it in our own way, we want to do something more groundbreaking.

GRAND THEFT AUTO V

TEN REASONS TO RETURN TO LOS SANTOS

With the PS4 release of Rockstar's crime opus upon us, we run through a bunch of additions, features and improvements that are calling us back onto the mean streets of Los Santos and Blaine County



IT LOOKS BETTER

■ **LET'S JUST GET** the obvious stuff out of the way first, yeah? While we don't know exact details on frame rate and resolution improvement (only that they *will* be improved), we're hoping for 1080p and a locked 30fps – 1080p/60fps seems like a hell of a stretch for a game as vast as this. The more powerful hardware also allows for a far busier city, with more traffic and pedestrians around as well as more impressive weather and dynamic damage modeling. It's no *Uncharted 4* visually, sure, but it looks a hell of a lot better than most 'definitive' re-releases.

THE WORLD IS FULL OF LIFE

■ **WHILE THERE WERE** a few animals dotted around the world on PS3, the PS4 version seems to be absolutely infested with all kinds of critters. Cats and dogs roam residential areas (better keep a close eye on Chop...) while forests are teeming with deer and likely a few more dangerous beasts akin to *Red Dead Redemption's* predators. Underwater exploration will be even more interesting (and dangerous) thanks to a few of the new inclusions, too.

YOU CAN KEEP YOUR GTA ONLINE CHARACTER

■ **THAT'S RIGHT, ALL** that time you spent trolling your way to level whatever wasn't wasted – you'll be able to transfer save data from *GTA Online* on PS3 or Xbox 360 across to the new version and pick up where you left off. It seems as though solo save data can't be copied across in the same way, sadly, but going through the excellent story in all its shiny new glory and drinking in every last detail is actually a pretty big part of *GTA V* on PS4's appeal.

MULTIPLAYER IS EVEN BIGGER

■ **AS WELL AS** being available from day one (no more waiting around like we had to do last year), *GTA Online* supports nearly twice as many players as its last-gen counterpart, with the cap now set at 30. Older activities clearly won't support that max player count as to do so would just be inviting chaos, but Free Roam sure will and presumably, new user-made missions will be able to as well. 30-person bike race down Mount Chiliad, you say? Yeah, we're down with that.

THERE'S STILL MORE TO COME

■ **YOUR GTA ADVENTURE** doesn't end with the on-disc content, not by a long shot. Online heists *still* haven't found their way into the PS3 version and it's likely that the PS4 upgrade was part of the reason for this, but we're hoping to see them soon and they'll be best on PS4. There's also chatter about DLC, likely taking the form of long-form expansions akin to excellent *GTA IV* duo *The Lost And The Damned* and *The Ballad Of Gay Tony*, or even something a little more far-fetched like *Red Dead's Undead Nightmare*. Yes please!

YOU CAN START THE GAME RICH

■ **THE EARLY STAGES** of both the main game and the online component were something of a grind as cash wasn't particularly easy to come by. Those who pre-order the game, however, will have the luxury of going into the PS4 version as virtual millionaires – Rockstar is offering \$500k of in-game cash for both Michael and your created *GTAO* character to make getting started that much more fun. As incentives go, we'd say that's not a bad one at all – pre-order through the PlayStation Store and you get even more cash, too.

LEGACY VEHICLES RETURN

■ **LONG-SERVING GTA** fans will be delighted to hear that a selection of the best and most memorable vehicles from older games will make triumphant returns in *GTA V* on PS4. Things like the Dodo and the Dukes are already confirmed, but this only paves the way for even more favourites – the suspension-modded lowriders from *San Andreas*, for example, or even the jetpack. Hey, we can dream...



RADIO STATIONS ARE MORE DIVERSE

■ **RUMOURS BROKE THAT** the game would have new radio content earlier this year when a voice actor let it slip, but now it's confirmed – the brilliant-as-ever radio stations will boast over 100 new songs and a bunch of new mixes, segues and ridiculous discussion. We'd love to tell you what some of the new tunes are but truth be told, we don't know and we honestly don't want to yet – there's nothing better than that feeling when a classic tune takes you by surprise mid-drive, just like when real life radio serves up a quality blast from the past.

DISTRACTIONS? YEAH, THERE ARE LOADS...

■ **AS IF THERE** wasn't already way too much to do, expect to find even more in the way of activities and things to drag you away from whatever way more pressing job you should be getting on with. There are more versions of some of the existing side missions (such as the shooting range challenges) as well as all-new distractions that tap into improvements elsewhere – it seems like there'll be more to the hunting this time out, while pacifists can shoot animals with cameras rather than guns in a new nature photography activity.

YOU NEVER DID EVERYTHING ON PS3 ANYWAY

■ **UNLESS YOU'RE ONE** of the super-hardcore Trophy hunters who managed to get the *GTA V* Platinum (welcome to the 0.1% Club, people), you probably missed a hell of a lot – collectables alone can devour hours when there are as many as this, plus ranking up all the way to 100 in *GTA Online* is basically a full-time job. So why bother doing all that on PS3 when you can just enjoy it all over again on PS4? Odds are there was more that you *hadn't* done than you had, so it seems like the smart play to us.

EXTENDED PLAY

INFAMOUS: SECOND SON

We're sure that many of you early PS4 adopters picked up InFamous: Second Son, if only to marvel at the particle effects that your shiny new piece of hardware is capable of. Perhaps now's the time to see what else it has to offer...



FIRST LIGHT

■ **LOOK, WE'RE NOT** going to lie – we're not particularly enamoured with *InFamous' First Light* expansion. Our review in issue 249 will tell you that. However, we did quite clearly say that for those of you who loved *Second Son*, *First Light* is a no-brainer, in that it essentially offers you more of the same. As well as giving you the chance to return to Seattle to create more superpowered open-world havoc, introducing some new mechanics and providing an opportunity to find out what made

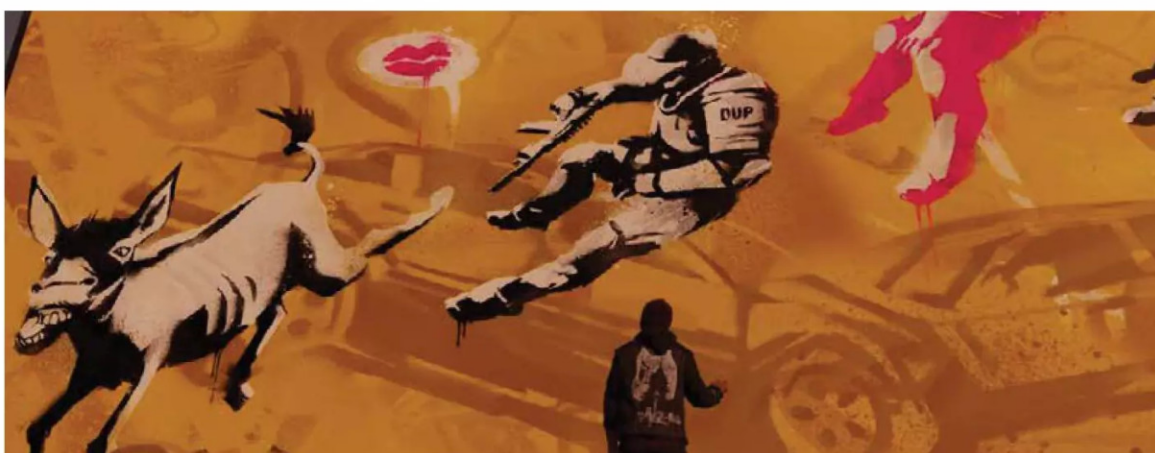
Fetch the character she became in *Second Son*, *First Light* introduces a new arena challenge mode. From vanilla hostage rescue challenges, to more bizarre scenarios in which you battle against aliens, or monsters, or whatever the hell they are meant to be, there are multiple stages for you to get your teeth into. More importantly, they've all got online leaderboards and what sweeter feeling is there than besting one of your friend's high scores? Fans of *Second Son* – just get it.



PHOTO MODE

■ **WHY THE HELL** are photo modes so good? Taking photos in a game shouldn't be that appealing. Why would we want to spend our time fiddling around with filters and angles in order to capture the perfect shot rather than actually *playing* a game? We don't know why, but we do. Photo modes are just brilliant, as is browsing through the incredible images that people have been able to create using the photo modes in *The Last of Us* and *InFamous: Second Son*. Seriously, if you've not used *Second Son*'s photo mode, you've got to try it. With all

that spectacular lighting, those gorgeous, glowing neon trails and the incredibly detailed cityscape around you, it's possible to capture some absolutely breathtaking shots. Photo mode is included in *First Light*, too, providing a second opportunity to get snappy. *Second Son*'s photo mode is exactly the kind of thing that the PS4's Share button was built for, so get back on *InFamous*, get your camera out, take some pictures and then share them with the world. With a game that looks like this, it's almost too easy to take gorgeous shots.



CHASING THE PLATINUM

■ **YOU'VE NO DOUBT** finished *InFamous: Second Son*'s campaign, but have you got the Platinum? First things first: if you want to go after that shiny Platinum trophy, you're going to need to play through the game's story a second time. You need one 'good' and one 'bad' ending and a playthrough on the hardest difficulty (obviously that playthrough can be combined with a good or bad run) for the Platinum trophy. Having got the campaign stuff out the way, it's a case of mopping up the

collectables and side missions littered around the game's map – completing all the city's stencil art, collecting all the Blast Shards and destroying all the D.U.P.'s security cameras, for example. There are also a few unique actions you'll have to perform to get some of the game's trophies – comet-dropping over 170 metres, staying in the air for more than ten seconds, and so on – but none of those should give you much trouble. If that's not enough for you, there's always the *First Light* Platinum to go after.



INFAMOUS & INFAMOUS 2

■ **MANY OF YOU** will have been part of the PlayStation family for a long time, while some of you may have only joined us recently from 'the other side'. Either way, there's a case to be made for going back and playing the previous two entries in the series.

We gave *InFamous* 81% and *InFamous 2* 83% when we reviewed them, meaning that they are very good games. You know that if you've already played them, but in any case, with the amount of time that's passed since their release, now is the time to go back and remember why you enjoyed them first time around.

For those of you whose first taste of the series in the form of *Second Son* has left you hungry for more, there's an even stronger argument to be made for playing the previous *InFamous* games. Sure, they aren't going to be as pretty as what you've been playing on PS4, but from a gameplay perspective, the open-world, building-hopping, car-smashing, superpowered core of *InFamous* is still there for you to enjoy.

COME TO
SILENT
HILL

THE BLUFFER'S GUIDE TO SILENT HILL



WHAT IS IT?

■ **QUITE SIMPLY, THE** *Silent Hill* series is a horror dynasty. Its first entry on the original PlayStation inevitably ended up being compared to the *Resident Evil* games, but that's something of a false equivalence – the *Silent Hill* games have their own brand of psychological horror, defined by their ability to build an oppressive atmosphere that keeps you in a state of constant unease.

The series' brand of third-person combat, puzzle-solving, twisted enemy design and psycho-occult thematics continued to serve it well as the series critically acclaimed second entry appeared on PlayStation 2 and carried it into its third entry, despite some cracks beginning to appear. As the *Silent Hill* games kept coming, though – *Silent Hill 4: The Room*, *Silent Hill: Origins*, *Silent Hill Homecoming* and so on – the quality started to decline. However, despite its somewhat shaky tenure in the wake of the third instalment, the name 'Silent Hill' still provokes impassioned responses from horror fans who will tell you that *Silent Hill* and *Silent Hill 2* are not only two of the greatest horror games of all time, but two of the greatest games, full stop.



THE STORY SO FAR

■ **SILENT HILL DOESN'T** have a narrative thread that leads through every game (though there are characters that appear in more than one entry) and, in any case, one of the series' traits is that its games have multiple endings, making any attempt at a story summary difficult. There are some constants, though. *Silent Hill* games generally start with someone entering a town, before quickly realising that there's something amiss. The protagonist is usually searching for someone, as well as trying to escape the terrifying situation in

which they've found themselves embroiled. Then, of course, there is the occult angle and the psychological themes with which *Silent Hill* is associated. The disturbing things that happen in a *Silent Hill* game are often linked to its main character's past actions and mental traumas, with the series delving into some dark and disturbing depths as a result. Given that *Silent Hill* games are normally self-contained in a narrative sense, we'd expect the same to be true when the series makes its debut on PS4 in the form of *Silent Hills*.



WHERE TO START

■ **YOU WILL FIND** some who argue that it's the original *Silent Hill* that's the best in the series, so starting right at the beginning isn't necessarily a bad idea. However, the general consensus is that it's *Silent Hill 2* on PS2 that represents the pinnacle. That alone means that we'd recommend *Silent Hill 2* as your way in, but it's not the only reason that we've picked it out. The first *Silent Hill* was criticised for its clunky and awkward controls at the time, so a newcomer going back that far is likely to find the game incredibly frustrating in the light of how far 3D games have progressed since the PlayStation era. The improvements made to the control system for its sequel, along with superior visuals that the PS2 facilitates should make it far more palatable for any of you who are jumping in for the first time. You could try and play *Silent Hill 2* via the *Silent Hill: HD Collection* that was released for PS3, but we wouldn't recommend it, given that the team that made it somehow managed to make the game look worse than the original. It's best to go back to the PS2 version, if you can.



ANY SPIN-OFFS?

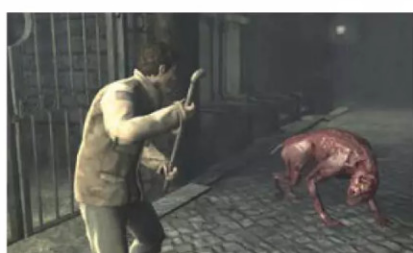
■ **YEP, THERE ARE** a couple of *Silent Hill* spinoffs that play with the formula. The game that represents the biggest departure from most *Silent Hill* games is *Silent Hill: Book Of Memories* – released for Vita in 2012 – which brought RPG elements and co-op into the fold, using a top-down

perspective, rather than the regular third-person view. *Silent Hill: Shattered Memories*, originally released for the Wii before being ported over to PS2, also changed things up, employing a mix of first-person and over-the-shoulder camera angles, as well as removing combat.



ANYTHING BESIDES GAMES?

■ **THE NOTORIOUSLY RUBBISH** *Silent Hill* film was released in 2006, starring Sean Bean and his vast array of equally dreadful accents. Somehow, it got a sequel in the form of *Silent Hill: Revelation 3D* in 2012. This was also rubbish. As well as making the move onto the big screen, *Silent Hill* also made the transition to print. There's a *Silent Hill* novel written by Sadamu Yamashita, which uses the story of the first game as its basis, and a series of *Silent Hill* comics released between 2004 and 2008. And guess what? They're generally regarded as being rubbish.



SO WHAT NEXT?

■ **HEADED UP BY** *Metal Gear* creator Hideo Kojima and director of *Pan's Labyrinth* Guillermo Del Toro, *Silent Hills* is going to be the next entry in the series when it comes to PS4 (there's a preview on page 24 if you want to read more). If the free playable teaser for the game that Konami released on PSN, *P.T.*, is anything to go by, it would seem that it's set to reinvigorate a franchise that's suffered over the years. *P.T.* is absolutely terrifying and, crucially, it doesn't rely on jump scares. Instead, the horror lies in the way that the game crafts a sense of near unbearable dread and foreboding – a hallmark of *Silent Hill* at it's best. Those are positive signs for the future of *Silent Hill*.



BLAST FROM THE PAST

OUR ADVANCED WARFARE MAP WISHLIST

Whatever multiplayer game it is that you might be playing, you'll soon find that particular maps start to stand out as your favourites. Cognisant of that fact, the *Call Of Duty* series has made a habit of bringing back one or two fan favourites with every release. Even though that might be more of a challenge in *Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare*, given that the series' movement mechanics have been overhauled, it's something we still expect to see. Here are some of the classic maps that we want to see make a return...

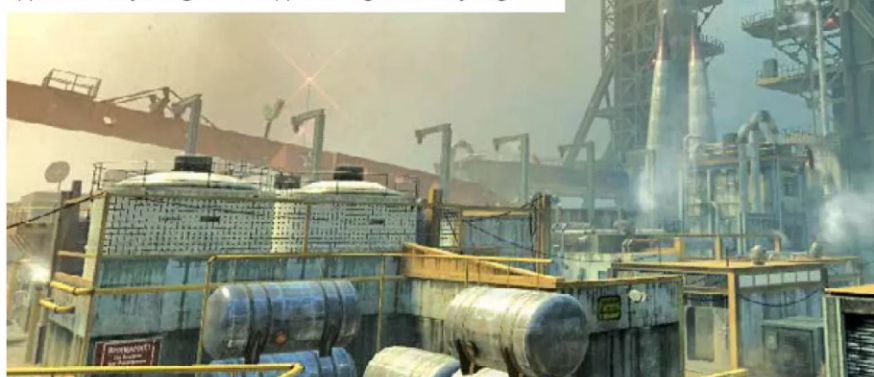


SHIPMENT MODERN WARFARE

■ **THIS MAP WAS** great fun. Why? Because it was tiny, making it incredibly chaotic. Expect to die a lot. Airstrike killstreaks were absolutely deadly on this map, so it would be interesting to see what aerial killstreaks *Advanced Warfare* could put at our fingertips. Well, assuming we could survive long enough in Shipment to use them.

LAUNCH BLACK OPS

■ **IF FOR NO** other reason that we enjoyed seeing chumps getting smoked by standing under the rocket that would launch midway through the match, we'd appreciate seeing a new version of Launch in *Advanced Warfare*. We loved the sense of apprehension you'd get when approaching the railway ridge.



NUKETOWN BLACK OPS

■ **ONE OF COD'S** most beloved maps, Nuketown is the epitome of balance, courtesy of the fact that it's almost symmetrical. The fact that it's relatively small means that matches on it tend to be fast-paced and chaotic. Also, a nuclear bomb goes off at the end of the match, killing everyone before they reanimate as zombies.





TERMINAL MODERN WARFARE 2

■ **ONE OF THE** most popular maps in *Modern Warfare 2*, Terminal's already had a remake in *Modern Warfare 3*. We don't care; we'll happily play this one again. Terminal is excellent for mid-range combat, making Assault Rifles and SMGs a must. Don't expect *Advanced Warfare*'s dash mechanic to allow you to survive in the hallway of death, though.



CRASH MODERN WARFARE

■ **REGARDED BY COD** veterans as one of the greatest maps in the series' history, we had to put Crash into contention for an *Advanced Warfare* remake. Whatever approach you take on this map, there's always a flanking route, always a way to counter it and that makes for some incredibly exciting back-and-forth matches.



GRID BLACK OPS

■ **WITH MULTIPLE BUILDINGS**, plenty of cover and opportunities for flanking. Grid was quite simply a well-designed map. Presumably we wouldn't get the RC killstreak to make use of the ventilation shafts in *Advanced Warfare*, but we think the map is good enough to stand on its own without that element.



FIRING RANGE BLACK OPS

■ **ONE OF THE** best things about this map is that games on it tended not to follow the same pattern, as can be the case in certain *COD* maps. Perhaps *Advanced Warfare*'s dash mechanic would help snipers in their scramble for the central tower, but the rest of us will stick to close quarters, thank you very much.



TURBINE BLACK OPS 2

■ **THIS MAP SUPPORTS** a variety of styles, with snipers using buildings overlooking the map's open centre, and close quarters players favouring the paths leading from the central area. The way that you can climb most of the rocks and cliffs sets it apart, and that verticality would only be enhanced by a double jump.



HIGHRISE MODERN WARFARE 2

■ **UNLESS YOU'RE A** sniper, this map can be frustrating if you try and dig in alongside the players trading blows from the offices at each end of the map. That's why it's vital to make use of the multi-tiered nature of Highrise to flank your enemies – indeed, that's what makes it a good map. Watch out for the git who always takes you out from the end of the crane.

TROPHY GUIDE

PS PLUS TROPHY GUIDE



DRIVECLUB

PLATFORM: PS4 DIFFICULTY: 1/5

TROPHIES: 27 1 7 9 10

■ **TO BE HONEST**, *Driveclub* is more about the grind than anything else. First things first, though, you'll want to join a club as soon as you can, whether that's with friends or a random one suggested to you by the game. With that you can drive the 1,000 miles necessary for 'Lifer', as well as tick off the other grindy Trophies that require you to drift for a million points, reach driver level 50 or max out an accolade. Keep an eye out for a 12-player race and try and win it without smashing into any other cars – tricky, admittedly, but you can manage it during the Amateur Trophy cup. The same goes for 'Nose To Tail' for drafting 2,000 meters in a single event, which you'll pick up naturally as long as you keep remembering to aim for it.



DUST: AN ELYSIAN TAIL

PLATFORM: PS4 DIFFICULTY: 2/5

TROPHIES: 31 1 6 4 20

■ **YOU'RE BEST OFF** starting *Dust: An Elysian Tail* on at least Tough difficulty, firstly because there's a Trophy for it but also because the increased health of your enemies will make for the 1,000 hit combo Trophy much easier. This latter Trophy will be possible later into the game for obvious reasons, but it will need you to play carefully so as to not lose the combo streak. 'Cutting It Close', too, will be a Trophy you need to actively aim for, by lowering your health to less than 10% and parrying; it's tricky, but once you've mastered the art of parrying there shouldn't be any trouble if you attempt this on a weaker enemy. The rest of the Trophies should come quite naturally as you play through to the end.

SPELUNKY

PLATFORM: PS4/VITA DIFFICULTY: 5/5

TROPHIES: 13 0 1 3 9

■ **YOU'LL NEED A** lot of practice just to reach the end of *Spelunky*, let alone complete some of these hard-as-nails Trophies. 'Ironman', for example, requires you to complete the game in a single sitting from start to finish without using a shortcut. Then there's 'Speedlunky', which requires you to finish the game in eight minutes. Yep. And that's just a Bronze, too. You'll need to be super familiar with the mechanics of *Spelunky* to unlock this one, but if you're not finishing the earlier stages within a minute you're going to struggle. Your build is important here, and a compass will help the most since you'll know the direction to take. Bombs, mattocks and a pickaxe are helpful items, and the jetpack is invaluable if you can get it.



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: CHRONICLES OF MYSTARA

PLATFORM: PS3/VITA **DIFFICULTY:** 1/5 **TROPHIES:** 18 0 0 3 15

■ **THERE REALLY ISN'T** all that much to say about the Trophies for this game, since most of them are quite self-explanatory. Simply play through the game, level up, complete challenges and gather all Treasures – that last one might be the trickiest of the lot, but only because it requires actually *looking*. Fair warning though, it's been said that the Silver trophies have been glitched,

which means that even if you *do* complete every Challenge (for 'Completionist'), reach level 20 (for 'Dungeon Master') or collect all Treasures (for 'Scavenger') then you may not even unlock these Trophies. Bear that in mind if you are hoping to get 100%, although we'd like to think that Capcom would be on the case with a patch at some point...



RAINBOW MOON

PLATFORM: PS3/VITA

DIFFICULTY: 2/5

TROPHIES: 53 1 2 8 42

■ **HERE'S A TEDIOUS** bunch of Trophies.

Rainbow Moon is decent as an RPG, but its reliance on grinding for Trophies is unforgivable; you'll need to collect a certain amount of gold, unlock all abilities, complete certain number of quests, kill a particular number of beasts and a whole lot more. But you'll likely get most since there is one Trophy 'Level God' where you need to level one character up to level 500. Obviously this is going to happen post-game, where you'll want to grind battles after raising the level cap each time – for this, follow the 'main quest' post-game. During this time you'll most certainly tick off all of the Trophies on the list, as well as the half million Rainbow Coins Trophy – so don't worry too much if you're in it for the long haul.

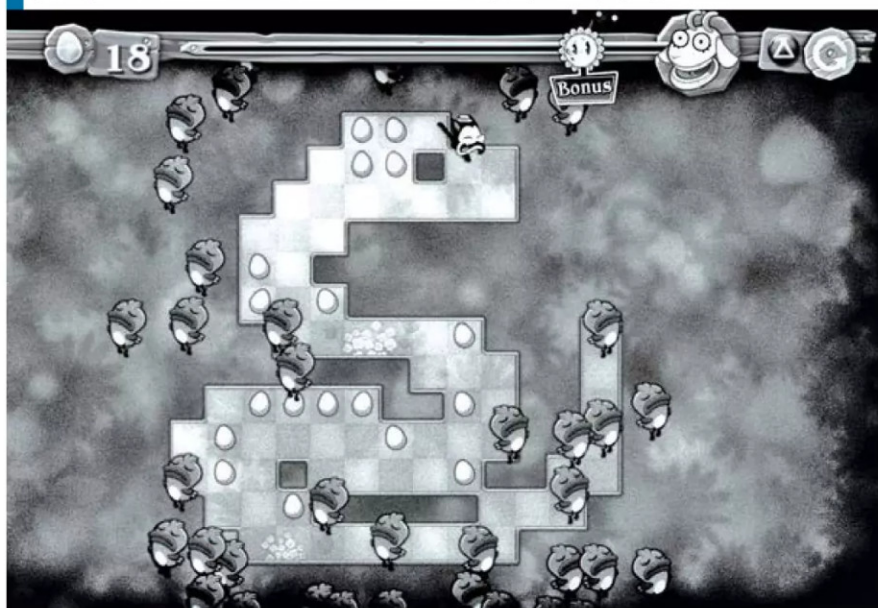


PIX THE CAT

PLATFORM: PS4/VITA **DIFFICULTY:** 3/5

TROPHIES: 11 0 1 5 5

■ **AS YOU MIGHT** expect for a smaller game like *Pix The Cat* there is no Platinum and, sadly, the Trophies themselves aren't all that exciting. It's a score-based game, so working towards understanding the mechanics so well that you can achieve upwards of 2 million points will be your primary goal, unlocking a handful of Trophies as you go. You'll also need to complete each of the Nostalgia stages and the Lab stages too, but this in itself won't be too difficult. Sadly the hardest Trophies will be to make it into the top 100 and top 10 of an arcade leaderboard; so either start practicing early to capitalise on the newbs getting involved or give up and come back in a few months when hardly anyone is playing it.



BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM

PLATFORM: PS3 **DIFFICULTY:** 3/5

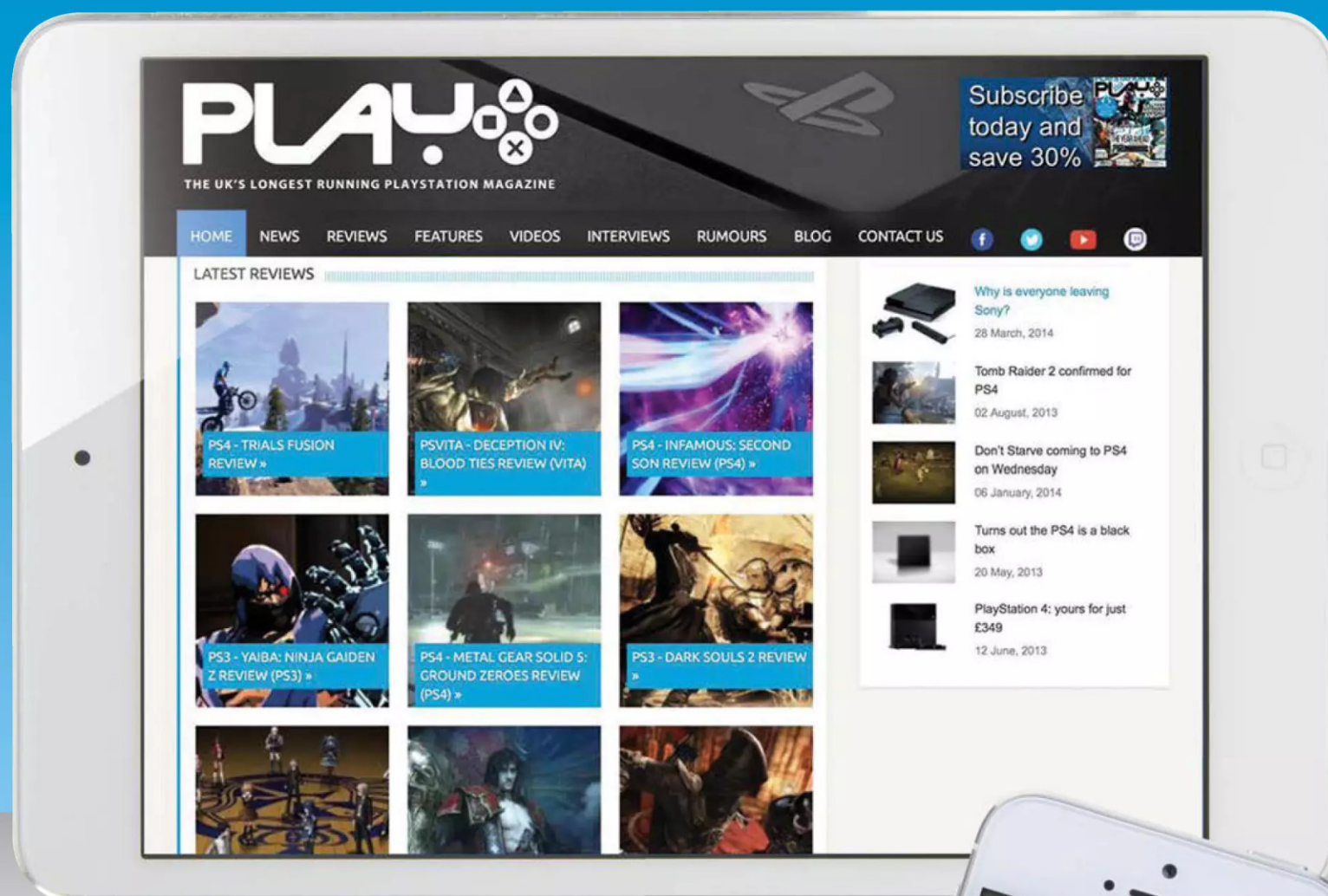
TROPHIES: 48 1 1 18 28

■ **THE TROPHIES** in the main game for *Batman: Arkham Asylum* are all pretty easy. There aren't many you can miss – besides 'Party Pooper', where you need to KO all the henchmen wearing party hats in the corridor leading towards an encounter with the Joker towards the end of the game. The real difficulty comes with the combat challenge missions, where you'll need to really understand Batman's combat to get those three star ratings. Practice stringing all of Batman's nine combat abilities together in a combo, because doing so will not only unlock you a Trophy but reward you with a huge chunk of points on completing the challenge. Ideally you'll also complete the entire stage in a single combo, earning you even more points for doing so (as well as not taking damage). One final tip: use X to leap over enemies, as it prevents attacks from hitting you, gives you time to survey the situation and – if nothing else – keeps the combo timer going.

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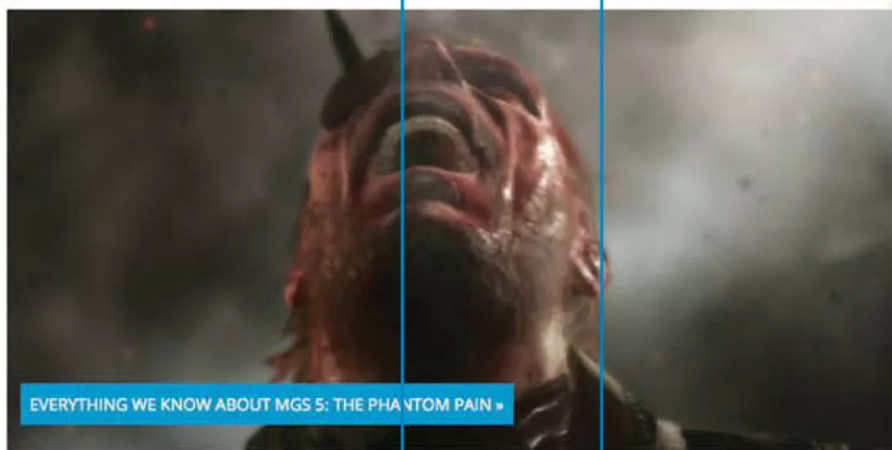
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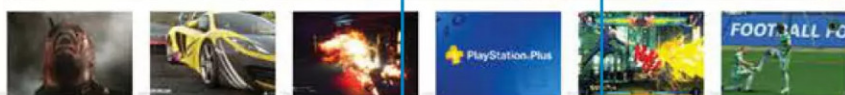
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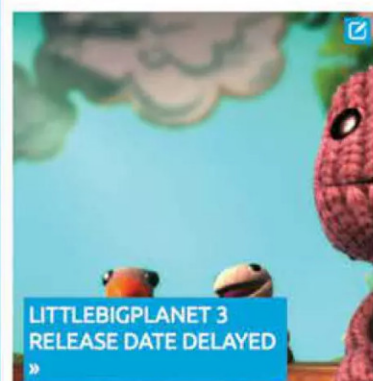




EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT MGS 5: THE PHANTOM PAIN »



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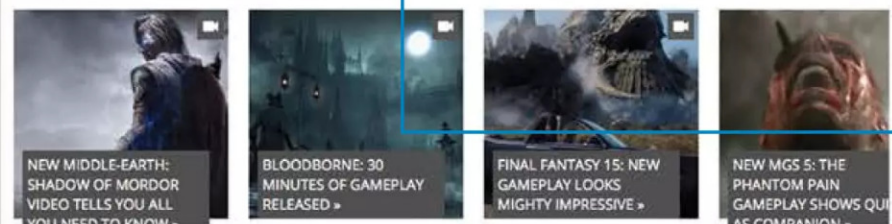
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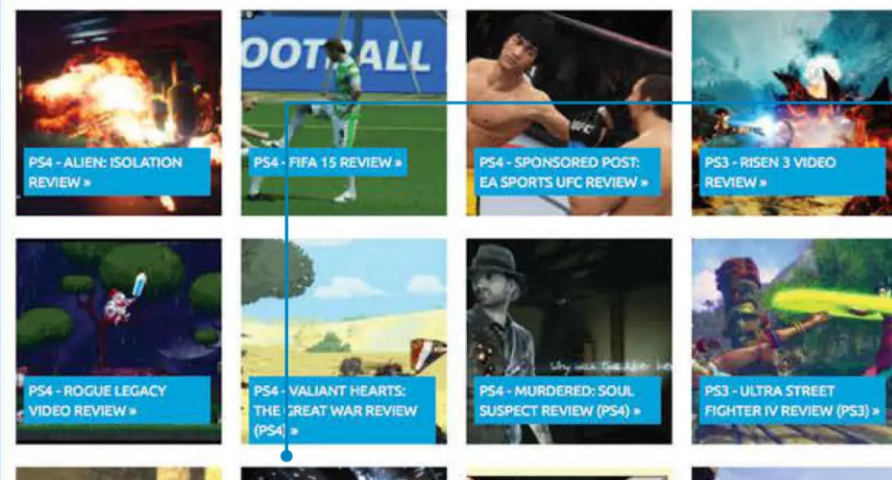
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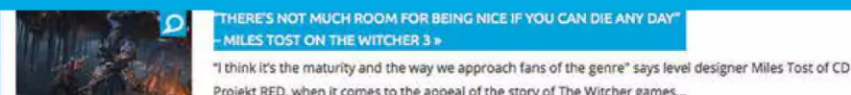
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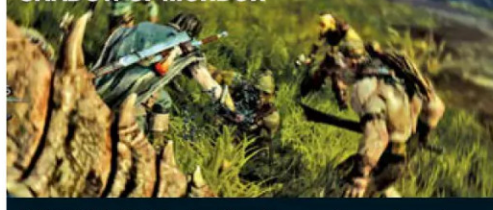
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The game changes each time, and the best players will win prizes – free games, or just some of the other tat around our office. Come and join in the fun next time and you could win something neat.



DRIVECLUB

Now that the PS Plus version of *DriveClub* is available, alongside the vanilla edition, there should be no shortage of people to race with online. If you'd like to be a backseat driver, feel free to come and join us on a live stream.



ASSASSIN'S CREED: UNITY

We got the chance to speak to the developers behind *Assassin's Creed: Unity* in our last issue and heard all about how this entry is an attempt to shake up the series. Let's get playing and see how the game's changes work in practice.

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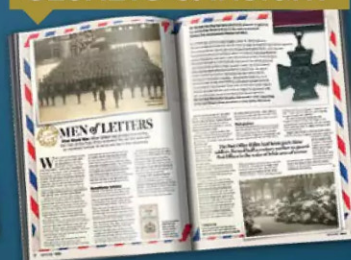
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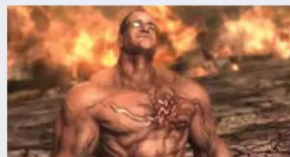


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PLAY+ PLUS PlayList

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT A GAME SCORED THEN THESE PAGES ARE FOR YOU

TEAM PICKS BEST BOSSES



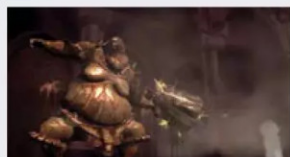
top five LUKE ALBIGÉS

- 1 Senator Armstrong (MGR: Revengeance)
- 2 Nargacuga (Monster Hunter Freedom Unite)
- 3 Augus (Asura's Wrath)
- 4 Jubileus The Creator (Bayonetta)
- 5 Onslaught (Marvel Vs Capcom)



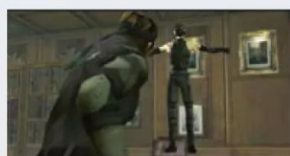
top five LIAM WARR

- 1 Ender Dragon (Minecraft)
- 2 Senator Armstrong (MGR: Revengeance)
- 3 Armando Becker (Max Payne 3)
- 4 Atoq Navarro (Uncharted: Drake's Fortune)
- 5 King (Virtua Tennis 4)



top five STEVE HOLMES

- 1 Ornstein & Smough (Dark Souls)
- 2 The End (Metal Gear Solid 3)
- 3 Sander Cohen (Bioshock)
- 4 Liquid Snake (Metal Gear Solid)
- 5 Gwyn, Lord of Cinder (Dark Souls)




top five PAUL WALKER-EMIG

- 1 Psycho Mantis (Metal Gear Solid)
- 2 All Of Them (Shadow of the Colossus)
- 3 The End (Metal Gear Solid 3)
- 4 Bob Barbas (DmC Devil May Cry)
- 5 Cronos (God of War III)

PS4 LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag	237	83%
Alien: Isolation	249	90%
Battlefield 4	238	80%
Bound By Flame	245	62%
Call Of Duty: Ghosts	238	75%
Child Of Light	244	79%
CounterSpy	248	50%
Daylight	245	20%
Dead Nation: Apocalypse Edition	242	74%
Destiny	249	85%
Diablo III: Reaper Of Souls	248	92%
Disney Infinity 2.0	249	80%
Don't Starve	240	81%
Dynasty Warriors 8 Xtreme Legends Complete Edition	243	80%
EA Sports UFC	246	75%
Fez	243	95%
FIFA 15	249	85%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn	243	85%
Hohokum	248	80%
inFamous: First Light	249	55%
inFamous: Second Son	242	86%
Killzone Shadow Fall	238	80%
Killzone Shadow Fall: Intercept	246	84%
Knack	238	55%
Lego Marvel Super Heroes	238	85%
Lego The Hobbit	244	65%
Mercenary Kings	244	85%
Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes	242	85%
Murdered: Soul Suspect	246	48%
Need For Speed Rivals	238	83%
NHL 15	249	63%
Octodad: Dadliest Catch	244	60%
Plants Vs Zombies: Garden Warfare	248	71%
Outlast	241	73%
Resogun	238	91%
 An addictive and accomplished shoot-'em-up, Resogun is an indie delight and a surprise PS4 launch highlight. Awesome stuff.		
Resogun Heroes	247	93%
Rogue Legacy	248	91%
Skylanders Swap Force	238	77%
Sniper Elite III	246	72%
The Amazing Spider-Man 2	245	25%
The Last Of Us Remastered	247	94%
Thief	241	70%
Tiny Brains	240	68%
Transistor	245	87%
Transformers: Rise Of The Dark Spark	247	30%
Trials Fusion	244	80%
Valiant Hearts	247	64%
War Thunder	239	80%
Watch Dogs	245	80%
Warriors Orochi 3 Ultimate	249	62%
Wolfenstein: The New Order	245	78%

PS3 LISTING



007 Legends	225	44%
194 2: Joint Strike	170	74%
2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil	244	69%
3D Dot Game Heroes	192	87%
50 Cent: Blood On The Sand	177	70%
Ace Combat: Assault Horizon	211	78%
The Adventures Of Tintin	212	58%
Afro Samurai	177	61%
After Burner Climax	193	91%
Agarest: Generations Of War	187	78%
Agarest: Generations Of War 2	223	43%


GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Agarest: Generations Of War Zero	209	52%
Age Of Booty	172	81%
Air Conflicts: Secret Wars	208	58%
Alice: Madness Returns	207	57%
Alien Breed: Impact	196	80%
Alien Breed 2: Assault	201	82%
Alien Breed 3: Descent	204	61%
Aliens: Colonial Marines	230	45%
Aliens Vs Predator	189	79%
All Zombies Must Die!	214	64%
Alone In The Dark	173	70%
Alpha Protocol	193	83%
Amy	215	19%
Anarchy: Rush Hour	194	73%
Ape Escape	208	55%
Aquapazza: Aquaplus Dream Match	239	70%
Aqua Panic	193	68%
Arcana Heart 3	207	79%
Armageddon Riders	207	65%
Armored Core: For Answer	173	65%
Armored Core 4	153	67%
Armored Core V	217	60%
Army Of Two	164	80%
Army Of Two: The 40th Day	188	65%
Army Of Two: The Devil's Cartel	231	44%
Ar Tonelico Qoga: Knell Of Ar Ciel	203	27%
Assassin's Creed	161	58%
Assassin's Creed II	186	89%
Assassin's Creed III	225	78%
Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood	199	91%
Assassin's Creed: Revelations	212	75%
Asura's Wrath	216	67%
Atelier Ayesha: The Alchemist Of Dust	230	60%
Atelier Rorona: The Alchemist Of Arland	198	77%
Backbreaker	193	70%
Back To The Future: It's About Time	204	71%
The Baconing	210	72%
Band Hero	187	68%
Batman: Arkham Asylum	183	85%
Batman: Arkham City	211	94%
Batman: Arkham Origins	237	85%
Battle Fantasia	176	67%
Battlefield 1943	182	89%
Battlefield: Bad Company	168	78%
Battlefield: Bad Company 2	190	93%
Battlefield 3	212	88%
Battleship	219	44%
Bayonetta*	187	93%
The Beatles: Rock Band	184	96%
Beat Hazard Ultra	213	79%
Beat Sketcher	201	85%
Beyond Good & Evil HD	207	86%
Beyond: Two Souls	236	70%
Binary Domain	216	70%
Bionic Commando	179	82%
Bionic Commando Rearmed	169	88%
Bionic Commando Rearmed 2	203	61%
BioShock	172	93%
BioShock 2	189	88%
BioShock Infinite	230	97%
Birds Of Steel	217	55%
BlackSite	163	43%
Blade Kitten	197	72%
Bladestorm: The Hundred Years' War	160	58%
Blast Factor	152	72%
BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger	190	85%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift	198	94%
Blazing Angels	151	54%
Bleach: Soul Resurrección	209	63%
Blitz: The League II	172	67%
Blokus	202	54%
BloodRayne: Betrayal	211	62%
Blur	193	86%
Bodycount	210	54%
Bombberman Ultra	185	82%
Borderlands	185	80%
Borderlands 2	223	90%
The Bourne Conspiracy	168	72%


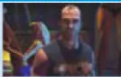
GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Braid	188	93%
Brink	206	67%
Brothers: A Tale Of Two Sons	233	83%
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	171	75%
Brütal Legend	185	79%
Bulletstorm	203	86%
The Bureau: XCOM Declassified	235	57%
Burnout Crash	211	79%
Burnout Paradise	162	74%
Burn Zombie Burn	178	85%
Buzz! Quiz TV	168	82%
Buzz! Quiz World	185	70%
Calling All Cars	155	81%
Call Of Duty 3	151	77%
Call Of Duty: World At War	173	68%
Call Of Duty 4: Modern Warfare	160	88%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 2	186	94%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 3	212	88%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops	199	94%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops II	226	80%
Call Of Juarez: Bound In Blood	181	85%
Call Of Juarez: Gunslinger	232	80%
Call Of Juarez: The Cartel	208	30%
Captain America: Super Soldier	208	70%
Castle Crashers	200	88%
Castlevania: Harmony Of Despair	212	67%
Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow	197	85%
Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow 2	241	81%
Carnival Island	213	53%
Catan	195	85%
Cars 2	208	68%
The Cave	230	77%
Catherine	215	61%
Champion Jockey	210	50%
Chronicles Of Riddick: Assault On Dark Athena	178	87%
Child Of Eden	211	80%
Chime Super Deluxe	203	80%
Civilization Revolution	168	90%
Clash Of The Titans	193	65%
Clive Barker's Jericho	159	84%
The Club	163	80%
Colin McRae: DiRT	158	91%
Colin McRae: DiRT 2	184	87%
Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3	178	65%
Commander's Challenge	185	68%
Command & Conquer	175	44%
Comet Crash	186	84%
Comix Zone	210	62%
Conan	160	71%
Condemned 2	165	78%
Costume Quest	199	70%
Conflict: Denied Ops	164	50%
Counter Strike: Global Offensive	223	89%
Crash Commando	174	80%
Crash Time 4: The Syndicate	218	37%
Crazy Machines Elements	210	71%
Create	199	71%
Critter Crunch	188	91%
Cross Edge	182	59%
Crystal Defenders	184	48%
Crysis 2	204	72%
Crysis 3	230	61%
Cubixx HD	207	76%
The Cursed Crusade	211	40%
Damnation	181	38%
Damage Inc: Pacific Squadron WWII	223	37%
Dance Dance Revolution	201	52%
Dante's Inferno	189	80%
Dark Mist	164	53%
The Darkness	154	91%
The Darkness II	215	76%
Dark Sector	165	62%
Dark Souls	211	90%
Dark Souls II	242	90%
Darkstalkers Resurrection	230	82%
Dark Void	188	81%
Darksiders	188	83%
Darksiders II	221	86%

THIS MONTH'S NEW ENTRIES

The newest games, freshly
squeezed among all your
old favourites

Destiny	85%
FIFA 15	85%
inFamous: First Light	55%
Alien: Isolation	90%
Disney Infinity 2.0	80%
NHL 15	63%
Warriors Orochi 3 Ultimate	62%
Tales Of Xillia 2	71%
Danganronpa 2: Goodbye Despair	89%




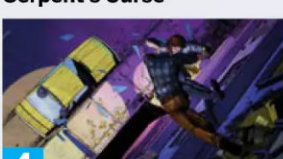
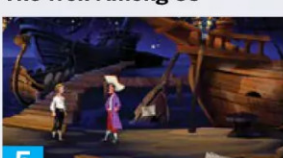


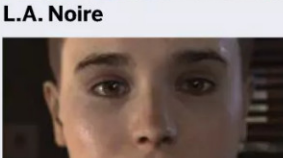


GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
DC Universe Online	202	80%
de Blob 2	203	65%
Dead Or Alive 5	223	78%
Dead Island	210	79%
Dead Island: Riptide	231	65%
Dead Rising 2	197	78%
Dead Rising 2: Off The Record	211	61%
Dead Space	172	87%
Dead Space 2	201	92%
Dead Space 3	228	70%
Dead Space: Extraction	203	88%
Dead Space: Ignition	199	47%
Dead To Rights: Retribution	192	68%
Deadly Premonition: The Director's Cut	231	82%
Dead Nation	201	86%
Deadpool	233	60%
DeathSpank	195	83%
Def Jam: Icon	151	79%
Def Jam Rapstar	199	72%
Defiance	231	50%
Demon's Souls	193	92%
Destroy All Humans!: Path Of The Furon	178	29%
Derrick The Deathfin	227	79%
Deus Ex: Human Revolution	209	91%
Devil May Cry 4	163	89%
Devil May Cry HD Collection	217	80%
Diablo III	235	89%
DiRT 3	206	85%
DiRT Showdown	219	84%
Disgaea 3: Absence Of Justice	175	81%
Dishonored	224	92%
Disney Infinity	235	81%
DJ Hero	186	91%
DJ Hero 2	198	88%
Doctor Who: The Eternity Clock	220	32%
Doom 3: BFG Edition	225	69%
Double Dragon Neon	224	37%
DmC Devil May Cry	227	93%
 DmC injects new life into one of the best genres in all of gaming, and does so with a style and confidence that elevates it beyond its roots.		
Dragon Age: Origins	186	82%
Dragon Age II	203	86%
Dragon Ball: Raging Blast	186	40%
Dragon Ball Z: Burst Limit	168	61%
Dragon's Crown	235	87%
Driver: San Francisco	209	68%
Droplitz	184	91%
Duke Nukem Forever	207	33%
D&D: Chronicles Of Mystara	233	80%
Dungeon Siege III	206	80%
Dust 514	233	51%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam	160	40%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 2	176	43%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 3	208	56%
Dynasty Warriors: Strikeforce	189	37%
Dynasty Warriors 6	164	30%
Dynasty Warriors 6: Empires	181	44%
Dynasty Warriors 7	204	32%
Dynasty Warriors 7: Empires	230	40%
Dynasty Warriors 8	234	71%
Earthworm Jim HD	196	89%
EA Sports Active 2	200	81%
EA Sports Grand Slam Tennis	215	75%
EA Sports MMA	198	89%
Eat Lead	178	38%
Eat Them!	202	60%
echochrome	169	85%
echochrome II	202	83%
EDF: Insect Armageddon	208	64%
The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	152	91%
The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim	212	93%
Elefunk	170	45%
El Shaddai: Ascension Of The Metatron	208	77%
Enchanted Arms	152	69%
Enemy Territory: Quake Wars	168	60%
Enslaved: Odyssey To The West	197	83%
Epic Mickey 2: The Power Of Two	226	55%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Eternal Sonata	176	87%
Euforia	212	85%
Everybody's Golf 5	158	88%
Everybody's Golf: World Tour	165	91%
Explodemon	203	70%
Eye Of Judgment	159	65%
EyePet	185	83%
F1 2010	197	86%
F1 2011	211	71%
F1 2012	223	79%
F1 Race Stars	226	61%
FaceBreaker	170	55%
Fallout 3	173	97%
Fallout: New Vegas	198	88%
Family Guy: Back To The Multiverse	227	40%
Fantastic Four: Rise Of The Silver Surfer	155	39%
Far Cry 2	172	74%
Far Cry 3	226	88%
Far Cry 3: Blood Dragon	231	85%
Fat Princess	183	65%
Fatal Inertia EX	168	65%
FEAR	151	81%
FEAR 2: Project Origin	176	87%
FEAR 3	208	60%
FIFA 11	197	91%
FIFA 12	210	86%
FIFA 13	223	82%
FIFA 14	236	90%
FIFA Street (2012)	217	74%
FIFA Street 3	163	66%
Final Fight: Double Impact	193	90%
The Fight	199	42%
Fight Night Champion	203	88%
Fight Night Round 3	151	87%
Fight Night Round 4	181	84%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn	236	81%
Final Fantasy XIII	190	85%
Final Fantasy XIII-2	214	80%
Final Fantasy XIII: Lightning Returns	240	80%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage	198	51%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage 2	230	58%
Flight Control HD	198	85%
Flock!	179	70%
Folklore	158	66%
Formula One Championship Edition	151	72%
Front Mission Evolved	198	52%
Frogger: Hyper Arcade Edition	221	55%
From Dust	211	82%
Fuel	180	49%
Full Auto 2: Battlelines	151	69%
Fuse	232	73%
Game Of Thrones	220	39%
Gatling Gears	207	62%
Genji: Days Of The Blade	151	38%
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	157	83%
Ghost Recon Future Soldier	219	60%
Ghostbusters: The Videogame	180	80%
GI Joe	183	22%
The Godfather	151	37%
The Godfather II	178	38%
God Of War III	190	88%
God Of War: Ascension	230	90%
 With brilliantly reworked combat mechanics and stunning graphics, Ascension is a gloriously violent prequel to the series.		
God Of War Collection*	188	93%
God Of War Collection: Volume II	210	70%
The Golden Compass	162	32%
GoldenEye 007: Reloaded	213	63%
Gotham City Imposters	216	78%
Gran Turismo 5	200	85%
Gran Turismo 6	239	83%
Grand Theft Auto IV	166	98%
Grand Theft Auto V	236	97%
 Rockstar's latest is a masterpiece; the perfect swansong for the generation and a wonderful addition to the franchise.		
Greed Corp	191	75%

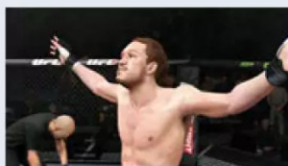
GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Green Day: Rock Band	194	77%
Greg Hastings Paintball 2	219	22%
Grid 2	232	79%
Grid Autosport	246	67%
GTI Club+	174	72%
GTA: Episodes From Liberty City	191	94%
Guardians Of Middle-earth	227	71%
Guitar Hero III	160	90%
Guitar Hero 5	184	81%
Guitar Hero: Aerosmith	168	63%
Guitar Hero Greatest Hits	182	76%
Guitar Hero Metallica	179	88%
Guitar Hero: Van Halen	189	65%
Guitar Hero: Warriors Of Rock	197	71%
Guitar Hero World Tour	173	95%
Gundemonium Collection	197	80%
Gunstar Heroes	181	85%
Hamsterball	194	72%
Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince	182	60%
Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix	155	32%
Haze	167	64%
Heavenly Sword	157	71%
Heavy Rain	189	94%
Heavy Weapon	187	75%
Heroes Over Europe	184	48%
Hitman: Absolution	225	93%
Hitman HD Trilogy	230	75%
Homefront	203	69%
The House Of The Dead 4	218	82%
The House Of The Dead: Overkill	212	75%
Hunted: The Demon's Forge	207	59%
Hustle Kings	190	87%
Hyperdimension Neptunia	202	21%
I Am Alive	217	64%
Ico & Shadow Of The Colossus HD	210	94%
IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds Of Prey	183	72%
The Incredible Hulk	168	52%
inFamous	180	81%
inFamous 2	207	83%
Inferno Pool	181	81%
Injustice: Gods Among Us	231	80%
Inversion	220	49%
Invincible Tiger: The Legend Of Han Tao	185	70%
Iron Man	166	58%
Iron Man 2	193	50%
The Jak And Daxter Trilogy	216	82%
Jak And Daxter: The Lost Frontier	187	59%
James Bond 007: Blood Stone	199	63%
James Cameron's Avatar: The Game	187	64%
JASF: Jane's Advanced Strike Fighters	217	30%
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure: All Star Battle	244	80%
Journey	216	87%
Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights	159	78%
Jurassic Park: The Game	194	60%
Just Cause 2	190	87%
Kane & Lynch: Dead Men	160	73%
Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days	196	71%
Katamari Forever	184	88%
Kick-Ass The Game	194	60%
Killer Is Dead	235	75%
Killzone HD	225	65%
Killzone 2	176	93%
Killzone 3	202	80%
Kingdom Hearts HD 1.5 ReMIX	236	80%
Kingdoms Of Amalur: Reckoning	215	70%
The King Of Fighters XII	182	82%
The King Of Fighters XIII	213	76%
Knights Contract	202	53%
Kung Fu Panda 2	207	20%
Kung Fu Rider	196	65%
Lair	158	52%
Landit Bandit	195	66%
LA Noire	206	91%
Lara Croft And The Guardian Of Light	198	90%
The Last Guy	171	91%
Last Rebellion	191	42%
Lead And Gold: Gangs Of The Wild West	193	65%
Legend Of Spyro: Dawn Of The Dragon	174	54%

*denotes import review

TOP TEN ADVENTURE GAMES

-  **The Walking Dead**
-  **Machinarium**
-  **Broken Sword 5: The Serpent's Curse**
-  **The Wolf Among Us**
-  **The Secret Of Monkey Island: Special Edition**
-  **Heavy Rain**
-  **L.A. Noire**
-  **Beyond: Two Souls**
-  **Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror**
-  **Discworld II: Missing, Presumed...!?**

PLAY'S BEST GAMES IF YOU LOVE...



PUNCHING PEOPLE

PLAY: EA SPORTS UFC

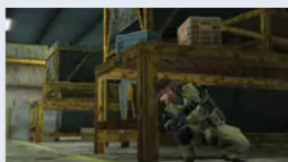
It's far from perfect, but there are plenty of good things to say about *EA Sports UFC*. The stand-up element can be very satisfying when you make proper use of dodges and parries before sitting opponents down.



BAYONETTA

PLAY: VANQUISH

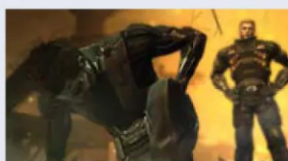
They might ostensibly be games that fall into completely different genres, but it's clear that they're the work of the same developer. There's a lesson here – if it's made by Platinum, it's probably very good indeed.



METAL GEAR?!

PLAY: MGS: PEACE WALKER

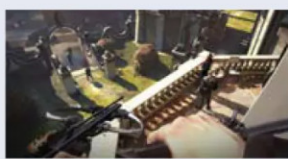
If you're as hyped as us for *The Phantom Pain*, we reckon you'll have played the main MGS games. You may have missed *Peace Walker*, though – a key chapter in Big Boss' story.



REBOOTS

PLAY: DEUS EX: HUMAN REVOLUTION

There have been hits and misses when it comes to reboots, but *Human Revolution* is definitely the former. Whether you're a fan or a newcomer, we recommend it.



THIEF



PLAY: DISHONORED

Speaking of reboots, *Thief* is not such a good one. If you like the original games, do yourself a favour and play *Dishonored*.


GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Legendary	173	62%
Lego Batman	173	65%
Lego Batman 2	221	80%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 1-4	194	79%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 5-7	213	67%
Lego Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures	167	73%
Lego Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues	187	71%
Lego Pirates Of The Caribbean	206	76%
Lego Rock Band	187	75%
Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga	160	76%
Lego Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	204	79%
Lego: The Lord Of The Rings	227	85%
Leisure Suit Larry: Box Office Bust	180	24%
Limbo	209	90%
LittleBigPlanet	172	94%
LittleBigPlanet 2	201	96%
LittleBigPlanet: Karting	225	85%
LocoRoco Cocoreccho!	159	80%
Lollipop Chainsaw	221	72%
London 2012	221	45%
The Lord Of The Rings: Aragorn's Quest	199	60%
The Lord Of The Rings: Conquest	175	52%
The Lord Of The Rings: War In The North	213	42%
Lost Planet 2	192	75%
Lost Planet 3	236	58%
Lost Planet: Extreme Condition	163	69%
Lost: The Video Game	164	38%
Lumines Supernova	178	90%
Madagascar 3	224	39%
Madden NFL 12	209	85%
Madden NFL 13	223	86%
Madden NFL Arcade	188	58%
Mad Riders	220	70%
Mafia II	196	81%
MAG	189	68%
Magic: Duels Of The Planeswalker	202	84%
Magic: Duels Of The Planeswalker 2012	208	70%
Majin And The Forsaken Kingdom	199	72%
Marvel Vs Capcom 2	182	90%
Marvel Vs Capcom 3	202	88%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance	151	64%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2	185	57%
Max Payne 3	219	77%
Mass Effect 2	201	97%
Mass Effect 3	216	93%
Medal Of Honor	198	86%
Medal Of Honor Airborne	161	85%
Medal Of Honor: Warfighter	225	72%
Mega Man 9	172	75%
Mega Man 10	192	82%
Mercenaries 2: World In Flames	171	78%
Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance	228	91%
<i>Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance</i> is another world-class entry in gaming's most fundamentally playable genre.		
Metal Gear Solid 4	167	92%
Metal Gear Solid HD Collection	214	91%
Metro: Last Light	231	60%
Michael Jackson: The Experience	205	58%
Microbot	202	51%
Midnight Club: Los Angeles	173	84%
Mindjack	202	38%
Minecraft	240	93%
Mini Ninjas	184	80%
Mirror's Edge	173	71%
MLB: The Show 14	245	90%
ModNation Racers	192	90%
Monkey Island 2: Special Edition	195	94%
Mortal Kombat	205	81%
Mortal Kombat Vs DC Universe	173	68%
MotoGP 10/11	204	64%
MotoGP 13	233	74%
Motorhead	173	60%
MotorStorm	151	92%
MotorStorm: Apocalypse	203	76%
MotorStorm: Pacific Rift	172	93%
Mud: FIM Motocross Championship	217	50%
MX Vs ATV Alive	206	42%
MX Vs ATV Reflex	189	68%
MX Vs ATV Untamed	164	58%
nail'd	201	61%
Namco Museum Essentials	193	60%
Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Storm	174	59%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS Generations	217	53%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS 3	230	85%
Naughty Bear	195	64%
NBA 2K12	211	88%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
NBA 2K13	224	88%
NBA Jam	200	68%
NBA Live 09	170	81%
NBA Street: Homecourt	151	68%
Need For Speed Carbon	151	76%
Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit	199	91%
Need For Speed: Most Wanted	225	95%
<i>Need For Speed: Most Wanted</i> is easily the best arcade racer of this generation. We absolutely love it.		
Need For Speed ProStreet	161	86%
Need For Speed Shift	184	81%
Need For Speed: The Run	213	63%
Need For Speed Undercover	173	75%
NeverDead	215	39%
Nier	192	54%
Ni No Kuni: Wrath Of The White Witch	227	85%
NHL 10	184	85%
NHL 11	198	89%
NHL 12	210	78%
NHL 13	223	74%
NIGHTS Into Dreams...	224	75%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma	154	88%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2	184	82%
Ninja Gaiden 3	217	63%
Ninja Gaiden 3: Razor's Edge	231	80%
Noby Noby Boy	177	85%
No More Heroes: Heroes' Paradise	206	89%
Nucleus	155	82%
Okami HD	225	90%
One Piece: Pirate Warriors	224	69%
Operation Flashpoint: Dragon Rising	185	78%
Operation Flashpoint: Red River	205	75%
The Orange Box	161	93%
Outland	207	72%
OutRun Online Arcade	180	80%
Overlord II	181	68%
Pac-Man Championship Edition DX	201	91%
Pain	183	69%
Payday: The Heist	213	88%
Payday 2	235	79%
Peggle	189	94%
Persona 4 Arena	231	91%
<i>Persona 4 Arena</i> is an absolute joy to play.		
PES 2010	185	72%
PES 2011	197	73%
PES 2012	210	74%
PixelJunk 4am	220	40%
PixelJunk Eden	169	67%
PixelJunk Shooter	187	93%
PixelJunk Shooter 2	204	90%
PixelJunk SideScroller	213	77%
PixelJunk Racers	160	74%
Planet Minigolf	196	58%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
PlayStation Move Heroes	204	54%
Poker Night 2	232	55%
POTC: At World's End	154	48%
Port Royale 3: Pirates & Merchants	224	54%
Portal 2	205	95%
Prince Of Persia	174	83%
Prince Of Persia: Classic	173	67%
Prince Of Persia: The Forgotten Sands	193	68%
Prince Of Persia Trilogy	200	88%
Prison Break: The Conspiracy	191	40%
Prototype	181	76%
Prototype 2	219	75%
Puddle	216	76%
The Punisher: No Mercy	182	49%
Puppeteer	236	70%
Pure	171	80%
Puzzle Chronicles	194	70%
Puzzle Dimensions	208	81%
Puzzle Quest Galactrix	181	68%
Quantum Conundrum	221	90%
Quantum Of Solace	175	57%
Quantum Theory	197	29%
Race Driver: GRID	167	85%
Ratchet & Clank: Q-Force	227	52%
Rag Doll Kung-Fu: Fists Of Plastic	179	83%
Rage	211	60%
Rainbow Moon	221	68%
Rainbow Six Vegas	155	88%
Rainbow Six Vegas 2	164	78%
Rango	203	54%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Ratchet & Clank: A Crack In Time	186	82%
Ratchet & Clank: All 4 One	211	68%
Ratchet & Clank: Tools Of Destruction	160	72%
Ratchet & Clank Trilogy HD	221	88%
Rayman Legends	235	83%
Rayman Origins	212	80%
Red Dead Redemption	193	92%
Red Faction: Armageddon	207	62%
Red Faction: Guerrilla	180	80%
Remember Me	232	61%
Renegade Ops	211	78%
Resident Evil Chronicles HD Collection	221	82%
Resident Evil Code Veronica X	211	72%
Resident Evil: Operation Raccoon City	217	33%
Resident Evil: Revelations HD	232	71%
Resident Evil 4 HD	210	93%
Resident Evil 5	177	86%
Resident Evil 6	223	88%
Resistance: Fall Of Man	151	83%
Resistance 2	173	90%
Resistance 3	210	88%
Resonance Of Fate	191	79%
Retro City Rampage	228	78%
Ridge Racer 7	151	75%
Ridge Racer Unbounded	217	67%
Riff: Everyday Shooter	162	86%
Rise Of The Argonauts	176	58%
Risen 2: Dark Waters	222	58%
Risen 3: Titan Lords	248	25%
Risk: Factions	202	80%
Rock Band Blitz	223	80%
Rock Band	169	94%
Rock Band 2	179	96%
Rock Band 3	199	84%
Rocksmith	223	78%
Rogue Warrior	188	09%
Rugby World Cup 2011	209	49%
Rune Factory Oceans	220	51%
RUSE	197	82%
The Saboteur	187	67%
Sacred 2: Fallen Angel	180	76%
Sacred 3	247	60%
Saints Row 2	172	79%
Saints Row: The Third	211	88%
SBK Generations	220	51%
Saint Seiya: Sanctuary Battle	216	52%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playground Ep1	194	90%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playground Ep2	194	92%
Savage Moon	175	87%
Saw	186	52%
Saw II: Flesh & Blood	198	36%
Scott Pilgrim Vs The World	197	77%
The Secret Of Monkey Island SE	195	92%
Sega Rally Online Arcade	208	74%
Sega Mega Drive Ultimate Collection	177	85%
Section 8: Prejudice	209	80%
SBK 2011	206	70%
SBK Generations	220	54%
SBK X: Superbike World Championship	193	67%
Sega Rally	158	92%
Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes	198	76%
Shadows Of The Damned	207	79%
Shank	197	86%
Shatter	183	91%
Shaun White Skateboarding	198	70%
Shaun White Snowboarding	173	72%
Shellshock 2: Blood Trails	177	32%
Shift 2: Unleashed	204	66%
The Shoot	199	76%
Shoot Many Robots	217	81%
Silent Hill: Downpour	217	81%
Silent Hill HD Collection	217	76%
Silent Hill: Homecoming	174	64%
The Simpsons Arcade Game	216	54%
The Simpsons Game	160	82%
The Sims 3	199	87%
The Sims 3: Pets	212	70%
SingStar	159	80%
Singularity	195	80%
Siren Blood Curse	170	62%
Skate	159	86%
Skate 2	175	82%
Skate 3	192	86%
Skullgirls	218	88%
Sleeping Dogs	222	80%
The Sly Collection	200	84%
Sly Cooper: Thieves In Time	230	60%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Sniper Elite V2	218	52%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior	206	45%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior 2	230	55%
SOCOM: Special Forces	205	63%
Sonic Adventure	198	63%
Sonic Adventure 2	225	69%
Sonic CD	214	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode 1	199	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode 2	225	40%
Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing	190	78%
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	227	88%
Sonic Generations	212	70%
Sonic The Hedgehog	151	52%
Sonic Unleashed	175	48%
Sorcery	219	76%
SoulCalibur IV	169	94%
SoulCalibur V	214	80%
South Park: The Stick of Truth	242	81%
Spec Ops: The Line	220	59%
Spider-Man 3	155	33%
Spider-Man: Edge Of Time	212	38%
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	197	69%
Spider-Man: Web Of Shadows	173	55%
Spin Jam	174	32%
Splatterhouse	200	58%
Splinter Cell Double Agent	153	79%
Split/Second: Velocity	192	90%
Sports Champions	196	83%
Sports Champions 2	225	65%
SSX	216	45%
Stacking	203	88%
Starhawk	219	81%
Star Ocean: The Last Hope International	190	63%
Star Trek	231	52%
Star Trek: D-A-C	189	57%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed	171	65%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	199	61%
Star Wars: Pinball	230	79%
Start The Party!	196	72%
Stormrise	178	51%
Stranglehold	159	65%
Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike Online Edition	209	92%
Street Fighter IV	176	95%
Street Fighter X Tekken	217	83%
Strength Of The Sword 3	234	81%
Strider	242	62%
Super Puzzle Fighter II HD Turbo Remix	168	78%
Super Rub-A-Dub	151	83%
Super Street Fighter IV: Arcade Edition	207	88%
Stuntman: Ignition	157	82%
Super Stardust HD	155	74%
Superstars V8: Next Challenge	190	55%
Superstars V8 Racing	181	63%
Super Street Fighter II Turbo HD Remix	176	72%
Super Street Fighter IV	191	90%
Supremacy MMA	211	40%
Switchball	191	75%
Swords And Soldiers	199	88%
Syndicate	216	78%
Tales Of Graces f	222	77%
Tales Of Monkey Island	196	91%
Tales Of Xillia	234	70%
Tales Of Xillia 2	249	71%
Tekken 5: Dark Resurrection Online	161	87%
Tekken 6	184	94%
Tekken Tag Tournament 2	223	90%
Test Drive Ferrari Racing Legends	221	60%
Tetris	202	84%
Test Drive Unlimited 2	203	62%
The Amazing Spider-Man	221	61%
The Last Of Us	233	94%
 When <i>The Last Of Us</i> is good (winter), it's better than anything else this gen – we do not say that lightly.		
The Last Of Us: Left Behind	242	81%
The Testament Of Sherlock Holmes	224	55%
The Walking Dead	231	92%
 <i>The Walking Dead</i> should be required playing for anyone who considers themselves a fan of our favourite medium.		
The Walking Dead: Survival Instinct	231	20%
Thor: God Of Thunder	206	38%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 14	231	61%
Time Crisis 4	166	69%
Time Crisis: Razing Storm	199	58%
TimeShift	162	72%
TMNT: Turtles In Time-Re-shelled	186	57%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
TNA Impact!	171	71%
Tokyo Jungle	223	81%
Tom Clancy's EndWar	173	80%
Tom Clancy's HAWX	177	75%
Tom Clancy's HAWX 2	196	69%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Blacklist	235	71%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Trilogy HD	210	78%
Tomb Raider	229	90%
Tomb Raider Trilogy	204	86%
Tomb Raider: Underworld	173	83%
Tony Hawk's Project 8	151	85%
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater HD	223	73%
Tony Hawk's Proving Ground	160	72%
Tony Hawk: Ride	188	52%
Top Darts	202	71%
Top Gun	198	53%
Top Gun: Hard Lock	218	45%
Top Spin 3	168	71%
Top Spin 4	203	60%
Topolai: Spinning Through Worlds	183	61%
Toy Story 3	195	82%
Transformers: Dark Of The Moon	208	64%
Transformers: Fall Of Cybertron	223	73%
Transformers: War For Cybertron	194	80%
Trash Panic	181	79%
Trials Of Topa	159	50%
Trine	184	85%
Trinity: Souls Of Zill O'll	202	56%
Trinity Universe	194	61%
Tron Evolution	200	17%
Turnbuckle	198	70%
Turning Point: Fall Of Liberty	165	40%
Turok	163	46%
Twisted Metal	216	68%
Two Worlds II	203	64%
UFC Undisputed 2009	180	90%
UFC Undisputed 2010	193	88%
UFC Undisputed 3	215	82%
Ultimate Marvel Vs Capcom 3	212	78%
Ultra Street Fighter IV	246	85%
Uncharted: Drake's Fortune	161	87%
Uncharted 2: Among Thieves	185	96%
Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception	212	90%
Under Siege	207	71%
Unearthed: Trail Of Ibn Battuta: Ep1	233	05%
The Unfinished Swan	225	78%
Unreal Tournament III	162	88%
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	151	54%
Valkyria Chronicles	173	82%
Vancouver 2010	189	76%
Vanquish	197	93%
Viking: Battle For Asgard	165	74%
Virtua Fighter 5	151	83%
Virtua Fighter 5: Final Showdown	220	90%
Virtua Tennis 3	150	91%
Virtua Tennis 4	205	79%
Wakeboarding HD	195	65%
The Walking Dead: All That Remains	240	89%
The Walking Dead: 400 Days	234	83%
Wanted: Weapons Of Fate	179	63%
Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine	210	51%
Warhawk	157	84%
Warriors: Legends Of Troy	202	14%
Warriors Orochi 3	217	59%
Watchmen: The End Is Nigh	183	55%
Way Of The Samurai 3	190	16%
Wet	184	41%
Wheelman	178	72%
Where The Wild Things Are	188	56%
White Knight Chronicles	190	55%
White Knight Chronicles II	207	49%
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?	214	79%
Wipeout HD	172	84%
Wizorb	222	78%
Wolfenstein	183	72%
Wonderbook: Book Of Spells	226	80%
Worms Collection	224	85%
Worms 2: Armageddon	198	87%
Worms Ultimate Mayhem	217	80%
WRC: FIA World Rally Championship	197	76%
WRC 2: FIA World Rally Championship	211	63%
WRC 3 FIA World Rally Championship	225	75%
WSC Real II	204	69%
WWE All Stars	204	82%
WWE Legends Of WrestleMania	178	80%
WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2011	199	63%
WWE 12	212	50%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
WWE 13	225	55%
X-Blades	178	54%
XCOM: Enemy Unknown	224	94%
 Thinking, planning, failing and dying is back in fashion: <i>XCOM</i> is a phenomenal reimagining of a classic title and an instant classic in its own right.		
X-Men Arcade	203	60%
X-Men Destiny	211	35%
X-Men Origins: Wolverine	179	71%
Yaiba: Ninja Gaiden Z	242	35%
Yakuza: Dead Souls	216	60%
Yakuza 3	191	80%
Yakuza 4	203	79%
Zen Pinball 2	224	90%
Zombie Apocalypse: Never Die Alone	213	69%
Zone Of The Enders HD Collection	226	81%
Zuma	182	78%

PS VITA LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
A-Men	217	70%
Army Corps Of Hell	217	64%
Assassin's Creed III: Liberation	225	76%
Atelier Meruru: The Apprentice Of Arland	221	35%
Everybody's Golf	215	86%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift Extend	216	85%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops Declassified	227	18%
Danganronpa: Trigger Happy Havoc	242	85%
Danganronpa 2: Goodbye Despair	249	89%
Dead Nation	201	86%
Destiny Of Spirits	244	76%
Dokuro	230	71%
Earth Defense Force 2017 Portable	230	82%
Escape Plan	216	81%
FIFA Football	216	80%
fiOw	151	90%
Flower	176	85%
Gravity Crash	187	85%
Gravity Rush	219	86%
Hotline Miami	233	85%
Hustle Kings	216	81%
Joe Danger	194	96%
Killzone: Mercenary	236	88%
LittleBigPlanet	223	93%
Little Deviants	215	69%
Lumines Electric Symphony	216	85%
MGS HD Collection	221	70%
ModNation Racers: Road Trip	215	59%
Mortal Kombat	219	83%
MotorStorm RC	217	81%
Muramasa Rebirth	234	80%
New Little King's Story	224	70%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma Plus	217	72%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2 Plus	230	60%
Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath HD	214	86%
Orgarhythm	230	55%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
Persona 4 Golden	228	94%
PixelJunk Monsters	163	94%
Puddle	222	82%
Rayman Origins	216	84%
Reality Fighters	215	52%
Resistance: Burning Skies	219	54%
Ridge Racer	216	48%
Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken	212	82%
Silent Hill: Book Of Memories	225	32%
Sorcery Saga: Curse of the Great Curry God	240	70%
Soul Sacrifice	232	85%
Sound Shapes	223	88%
Superfrog HD	234	41%
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Splitz	224	78%
Sumoni: Demon Arts	230	46%
Super Stardust Delta	216	84%
Tearaway	239	80%
Terraria	232	85%
Touch My Katamari	216	83%
Toukiden: The Age Of Demons	241	86%
Ultimate Marvel vs Capcom 3	216	80%
Uncharted: Fight For Fortune	227	83%
Uncharted: Golden Abyss	215	83%
Unit 13	216	67%
Velocity Ultra	233	80%
Virtua Tennis 4: World Tour Edition	215	81%
Virtue's Last Reward	227	84%
Wipeout 2048	215	87%

*denotes import review

PLAYING THE PLAYLIST

Watch out! Games!



WHAT
(have they been playing?)

Destiny

WHY (was it chosen?)
It's a legitimate addiction now

LUKE ALBIGÉS

PLENTY OF PEOPLE may have been pissed off by its rude loot system and relatively limited spread of content, but I still can't drag myself away from *Destiny*. We've got a decent little team going now and I've finally reached the point where I don't just embarrass myself every time I visit the Crucible. Which is nice. With my Titan (29) replacing my Hunter (26) as my main, I've only got Warlock left to level, and there's already a selection of Exotics waiting in the bank for when I get around to that. Not right now, though – the Vault Of Glass won't finish itself on hard mode, after all...



WHAT
(have they been playing?)

Dark Souls

WHY (was it chosen?)
Let's see what all the fuss is about

PAUL WALKER-EMIG

THIS IS ONE game that didn't quite click with me on my first, brief foray into its hostile world. Of course, with everyone bleating on about how brilliant it was all the time, I had it in the back of my mind that *Dark Souls* is a game that deserved to get another shot. Well, I finally got around to starting the game again and I finally get it. With a bit of advice from Luke and Steve, I've conquered the Bell Gargoyles, the Capra Demon and the Gaping Dragon, and am now on my merry way to Blighttown.



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TERROR REBORN ON PS4

SILENT HILLS

Kojima revives the classic
psychological horror series



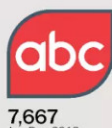
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"...SLAP-YOUR-FACE-
BRILLIANT."

joustiq


"DELICIOUSLY
DARK"

the escapist

"THOUGHT-PROVOKING"

gamesradar.

"....A TOUR DE
FORCE OF SEX,
LIES, MURDER,
DECEIT, AND,
ULTIMATELY,
HOPE."

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"ELECTRIFYING"

GAMESPOT

"SMART,
BRUTAL, AND
EMOTIONAL."

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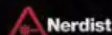


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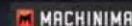
"EMOTIONALLY
CRIPPLING AND
STAGGERING"



"UNFORGETTABLE."



"BRILLIANTLY
CRAFTED"



"MASTERFUL
STORYTELLING"



THE WALKING DEAD

SEASON TWO



A TELLTALE GAMES SERIES

"A MASTERSTROKE
BY TELLTALE"

BuzzFeed

"UNPRECEDENTED"

the Escapist

"REFUSES TO
PULL ANY
PUNCHES"

gameinformer

"DOESN'T
WASTE A
SINGLE
MINUTE"



EVERY CHOICE COULD BE YOUR LAST...

You are Clementine, a young survivor of a plague that has destroyed everything you knew and loved. The world does not care you are only 11 years old, does not care you are cold and hungry, and does not care death is around every corner. The undead feed on the living, the living cannot be trusted. Starving, never safe, and still looking for hope... what would you do?

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